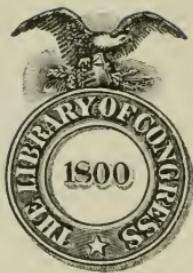


OLD WICKFORD

THE VENICE OF AMERICA



MRS. F. BURGE GRISWOLD



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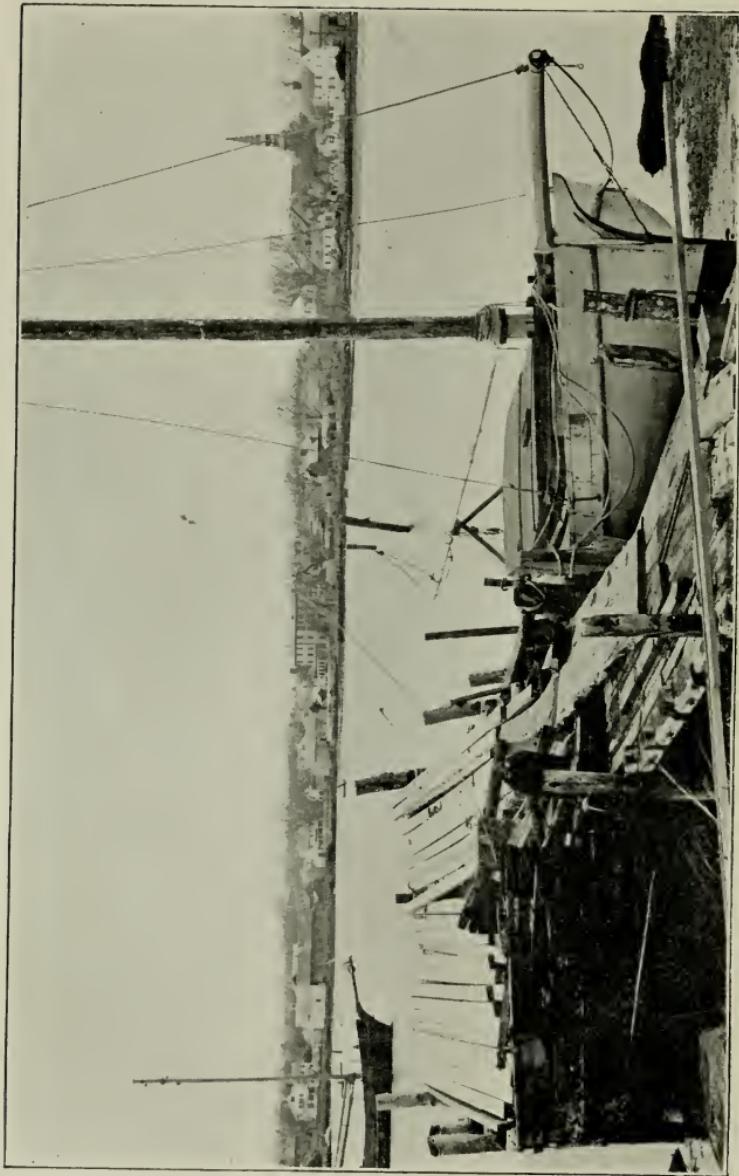
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Old Wickford:

The Venice of America.



VIEW OF THE VILLAGE, WICKFORD, R. I. (Frontispiece.)

Old WICKFORD

“The
Venice of America.”



•• BY ••

MRS. F. BURGE GRISWOLD.

Author of “The Bishop and Nannette Series.”

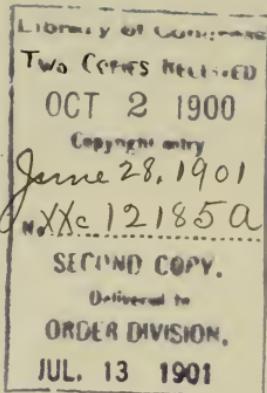


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REV. SAMUEL BRENTON SHAW, D.D.

Born in Wickford. (pp. 8-9.)

Old Wickford



CHAPTER I.

The Venice of America

THIS is the distinction given to the pretty village of Wickford, Narragansett, because of “the water wherein she lies like a swan’s nest, that doth both fence and feed her.”

The old and stately city across the seas, with its fine palaces, grand churches, and costly reliques, need not be ashamed of her humble namesake in this Western world.

Time was, when simple wooden huts were scattered among the small, grassy islets that lay off the coast of Venetia, and the main occupation of the people was fishing, and the preparation of salt by evaporation. The early bridges were wooden structures made by nailing planks on boats. One

of the first of stone was called “Ponte della Paglia,” “the bridge of straw,” being built with money obtained by the tax on straw, large quantities of which were used to thatch the early houses of Venice. The first church, erected in 432, could not boast elegance of design or architecture. St. Mark’s and the Ducal Palace were late in raising their magnificent walls above the Rialto, and centuries passed before the regal splendor of the present island city was attained. Who knows what of beauty and greatness our modern Venice may not present, when a thousand more years of progress and culture shall have been added to her existence?

The natural features of this locality must have been most charming and attractive when the Aborigines had free and undisturbed possession. No doubt their hearts swelled with pride and their eyes glistened, as they surveyed their bright domains, and felt their kingly power, before the white men came to reduce their area of territory, and subjugate them to the condition of vassals. To skim the broad bay, and the sparkling rivers, in their birch bark canoes, or by “dugouts,” or to traverse the forests and plains, feeling themselves rightful and

sole proprietors of all ; to fish, and hunt, and shoot, and maintain life with but little care or toil ; what more could they desire in these God-given haunts, that were to them a foretaste of their Great Spirit hunting grounds, where they were anticipating still better and more abundant subsistence, when called away from earth ?

Later, came the colonists, to tempt them to barter their glorious heritage for comparative trifles—so many coats and hatchets, and alchemy spoons, and knives, and pewter porringers, and hoes, and other articles as were to them new and strange, and therefore attractive, and over-estimated in value.

Little by little, their Narragansett tract, that originally embraced nearly the whole of the State of Rhode Island, as well as the islands of the bay, was reduced to the “Charlestown Reservation,” where the tribe that had numbered “five thousand fighting men and as many as a dozen wigwam villages within the compass of twenty miles,” when first the white men came to plague them, dwindled to a wretched remnant, without position or name.

It is pitiable to think how this tribe was stamped out of existence !

Roger Williams, Coddington, Gorton, and Smith, easily obtained land of Canonicus, Miantonomi, and other sachems, for the founding of white settlements. The Narragansetts were peaceably inclined, and friendly toward the English colonists, and were by no means avaricious in the exchange of property. Often they gave without stint or remuneration, and when bargains were made, the unsophisticated natives were frequently the victims of English sagacity, or duplicity. Think of a tract, ten miles long by thirteen broad, in exchange for "*thirteen English coats*"! That sale was in Connecticut and embraces the foundation of New Haven, Branford, and Wallingford. It is a single illustration of the cupidity of the white men in their dealings with the "Red."

The only currency in the early colonial times was the Indian wampum "peage," adopted by the new settlers. The Dutch called it "Sewan." It was a curious manufacture from the shells of the "Periwinkle," the "Quohaug," or round clam, and the "Mussel." The natives cut it into the form of small beads which they polished and pierced, stringing them in various lengths for convenience

in barter. "A fathom of wampum was a string of beads the length from finger ends to finger ends of the two arms extended; about six feet." The small dark eye of the Quahaug shell was all that was used of that bivalve, and was twice the value of the white Periwinkle. The Indians used the beads in their personal adornment, for chains, earrings, etc., as well as in matters of commerce.

Their "Treaty Belts" were elaborately wrought with the different colored beads so as to form in the native language a record of the transaction, and one of these pledges was always given in solemn ratification. I looked in vain, in the Historical rooms, Newport, Rhode Island, for some specimens of the belts and strings of wampum peage. After a serious hunt, the custodian of the curiosities found in a glass case about five of the black and white beads, which were the only relics in possession. I did not make any search in the Providence Museum, but in the Long Island Historical collection, in the department of Indian relics, there was one string of wampum and a painted representation of a treaty belt.

Articles in use not only by the Narragansetts,

but also by the Indian tribes throughout the American Colonies, are certainly worthy a place among our historic exhibits. As my thoughts while in Washington, D. C., were not upon this subject, I cannot tell what may be found in the National Museum, the headquarters for everything of interest to the people of the United States.

The shell money was accepted by the English and Dutch, in commerce or exchange with the red men, and specimens of this early currency should be faithfully preserved.

It is said that Miantonomi gave to Roger Williams the tract for our own Providence, though I have somewhere seen that “thirty pounds” were paid for it. The *fac simile* of the deed that bears the names of the Sachems Canonicus and Miantonomi, does not mention any price, though it says “sold.”

The last clause is, “for the many kindnesses and services done unto us, we do freely give unto him all that land upon the Mooshansick and Wan-asquatucket rivers”; so that we may infer that a portion may have been a free bestowal.

“Aquadneek,” or Rhode Island, was purchased

for forty fathoms of white wampum peage; ten coats and twenty hoes for the resident Indians, and five fathoms of wampum for the local Sachem.

In some historic sketches it is recorded that “one of the early settlers gave his coat to the Indians, as a recompense for clearing the swamp for the foundation of the City of Newport, and that before they begun the work, they cut the gilt buttons from the coat and strung them as a necklace.”

It does not seem amiss to preface my description of our American Venice with some explanatory notes concerning the surrounding country.

Drake says: “The name Narragansett, is derived from the Indian word “Nanrantsuack”—“A carrying place”—as there was much traffic back and forth.”

Elsewhere it is said to signify “hot and cold.”

Madam Knight, the daughter of Capt. Kemble, of Boston,—“who was, in the year 1656, set for two hours in the stocks, for the lewd and unseemly behavior of kissing his wife after an absence of three years,”—says, in her diary of a journey on horse-back from Boston to New York in 1704, while resting in Haven’s tavern near “Devil’s

Foot" on the site afterward the residence of the late Wm. Maxwell, Esq.:

"I listened to a strong debate concerning the name Narragansett. One said that the Indians so called it because there grew there a briar of prodigious height and bigness, the like of which was hardly ever known, named 'Narragansett.' He quoted an Indian of so barbarous a name that I could not write it."

Perhaps it was in allusion to this "prodigious briar" that the Sachem Canonchet was called, "That aspiring Bramble."

Madam Knight proceeds: "His antagonist replied, 'No, it was from a spring it had its name;' and he well knew where it was, which was so extreme cold in summer, and as hot as could be imagined in winter, and which was much resorted to by the natives, and was by them called 'Narragansett,' 'hot and cold,' and that was the origin of the name."

This would seem to accord with the Rev. Dr. McSparran's estimate of the climate. He writes:

"The transitions from heat to cold are short and sudden, and the extremes of both very sensible.

We are sometimes frying, and at others freezing, and as men often die at their labor in the fields by heat, so some in winter are froze to death with the cold."

The Narragansett country must have been of great value in the estimation of the colonists, so eager and protracted was the contention over it. In 1665 it was erected into an independent jurisdiction called "The King's Province."

Despite the royal commission and attempted authority and rule, the "United Colonies" continued to fight for its possession. They invaded the country, and in 1675, after the "Great Swamp" fight had almost exterminated the Indians, they claimed "The King's Province" as conquered territory.

Not until 1726 was the struggle relinquished, when the right of jurisdiction was given to Rhode Island. The remnant of the Narragansetts, after the terrible slaughter in the South Kingstown swamp, settled on the Charlestown Reservation, which was given to Ninigret as a reward for his neutrality in the combat. He was only collaterally related to the family of Canonicus, by the

marriage of his sister Quaiapen to Maxanno, son of that Sachem. He had not a drop of Narragansett blood in his veins, and did not deserve that his progeny should attain to the Sachemship. Nevertheless, several of his descendants had that honor.

An eye-witness of the coronation of Queen Esther, a great granddaughter of old Ninigret, in Charlestown, R. I., says: "She was elevated on a large rock so that the people might see her; the council surrounded her. There were present about twenty Indian soldiers with guns. They marched her to the rock. The Indians nearest the royal blood, in presence of her Councillors, put the crown on her head. It was made of cloth covered with blue and white peage. When the crown was put on, the soldiers fired a royal salute, and huzzaed in the Indian tongue. The ceremony was imposing, and everything was conducted with great order. Then the soldiers waited on her to her house and fired salutes."

Her son George was subsequently crowned king, but at twenty-two years old met with a sudden casualty, and was killed by a falling tree, which struck him on the head.

In 1709, Ninigret II. had made a quit-claim of all vacant lands, except a strip running from the Pawtuxet river around the shore, to Pawcatuck river, for a fishing privilege.

In 1822, there were 407 Indians on the Charlestown Reservation, with a church, a missionary, and fifty pupils at school. In 1838, the number had declined to 158, only seven being of *pure* Narragansett blood. Since then they have dwindled to a very few, who have inter-married with negroes.

“In 1880, the tribal authority was abolished through the agency of the Indian Commission of Rhode Island. In 1881, the Reservation was sold for the benefit of the Indians, and they were placed on the same footing as other citizens. The State reserved, and still cares for, the old burial ground of the Narragansett Sachems, on Summit Hill.”

Fort Ninigret is an object of curiosity to tourists, but it is thought to have been an outpost of the Dutch colonists, rather than the work of the Red men.

“In 1893, what was left of the tribe gathered in Charlestown for a final pow-wow. The meeting was in order to discuss the claim for the strip

of land on the shore. Nearly a hundred, more or less blooded of the Narragansetts, assembled in the old meeting-house. The old deeds were produced, and the justness of the claim was insisted upon; but the State holds the quit-claim papers, and the legal terms enable it to keep possession of the ceded territory, which is exceedingly valuable."

Any one who had seen the Indian chiefs gathered together in large numbers, for the discussion of disputed rights, must have noticed the stolid obstinacy with which they cling to their own convictions.

It was my privilege, while in Washington, D. C., in 1888, to be present when the Sioux delegation listened to the proposition to open their Reservation to white settlers. Secretary Vilas gave us a permit to hear his paper from the Government, read before about seventy of the chiefs. It was a rare occasion to see so many of these swarthy "Braves" in solemn conclave. They wore all sorts of costumes, yet were wholly unconscious of the incongruity and ludicrousness of their appearance. "Sitting Bull" was prominent, in wide brown linen trousers, white hat, and an old um-

brella hugged up under his left arm. My companion gained easy access to a seat appointed him beside a splendid-looking Indian dressed in a Brigadier General's suit, but I, a despised squaw, had to clamber with difficulty over the Chief's immovable legs, and endure his occasional curious and contemptuous stare during the session.

I could imagine, from the expressive faces, as the Government side of the proposed treaty was explained to them, how hard a task it would be to gain their confidence and consent. So many times had they been deceived, it naturally rendered them cautious and suspicious.

They were offered in the Bill just passed by Congress, fifty cents per acre for their lands. They had stipulated for a dollar and twenty-five cents, the same as the Government receives for its acres. Secretary Vilas, for the United States, wished to compromise by proposing a dollar for the sale of the first three years; seventy-five cents for the next two, and fifty cents for the next. Moreover, so soon as the Indians would accept these terms, two millions of dollars were to be put into the United States Treasury for them; or, if

they preferred, five hundred thousand could be paid to them immediately, and the remaining million and a half placed on interest. Should any one desire an allotment of land, he could have it, with two American mares, cows, seeds, farming implements, etc., etc., and twenty dollars apiece for each Indian, man, wife, and children; that land not to be subject to taxation for twenty-five years.

The Government proposed to survey the lands, and negotiate sales for the Indians, the expenses of survey and sale to come out of the two millions.

I could understand by the grunts of the Indians, and their conference with each other, with shaking of heads at certain points, that they were far from appreciating gratefully the proposition.

The result was that they neither accepted the Bill as passed, nor the proposed modified form, and they went home as they came, only wiser by a personal knowledge of the grandeur of the white men's National Capitol, and possibly a degree happier in the consciousness that their wishes and demands were to be peacefully considered rather than met with arbitrary coercion.

In the "Fifty-eighth Annual Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs to the Secretary of the Interior—March 2, 1889," is "An Act to divide a portion of the Reservation of the Sioux nation of Indians in Dakota, into separate reservations, and to secure the relinquishment of the Indian title to the remainder, and for other purposes." So far as I can interpret the intention of the Government, it is ready to yield somewhat to the will of the tribes, but there always seems to me an injustice in trying to rout them from their cherished possessions.

In the days of my childhood, the Charlestown Indians came frequently in small parties to encamp in the suburbs of our village. They had substituted for their original garb of beaver and deerskin, the English blanket, which they wore over their embroidered garments. Their moccasins were skilfully beaded, and worked with colored grasses, and some of the women would have seemed attractive but for the wild feathers on their hair, and the peculiar guttural in their voices, that frightened us away. The men lay around, lazily

smoking their pipes, while the squaws wove gaily-colored birch or rush baskets for sale.

At first we shrank timidly from the swarthy creatures, especially from the men, but the women were really gentle, and after a while won our confidence, so that a visit to the tents became a coveted pleasure, and we hailed with delight the annual encampment, and gladly played with the bright pappooses, thus propitiating their half civilized parents.

In the household of our grandmother were two Indian servants, one full-blooded, the other a half-breed.

“Dorcas” “stepped a Queen,” even when about her menial avocations. Physically, she was superb, and we held her in great admiration, regarding her gay bandanna turban as a royal crown, and taking every opportunity to invade her dominions and share her gracious sway.

Now and then she would imbibe too freely of the “fire water,” which her tribe owed to the white race, and at such times she held high carnival up and down the village streets, singing rollicking songs, until her kind mistress would go after her

and, leading her home, nurse her to sobriety. After such an escapade, she would give willing and faithful service for months before her wily enemy could again get her into his toils. She was an invaluable servant, and proved the possibility of training a wild, free people to habits of industry and domesticity.

“Tom,” her son, went to “The Banks” in summer as cook in a fishing vessel, and in winter staid at home, caring for the horses and the out-door “chores” and the fires in the house. Sometimes he helped his mother in the culinary domain, giving us such fish chowder and clam fritters, as no epicure could resist.

Our grandmother, who brought him up from his early boyhood, was to him the impersonation of beauty and goodness. It pleased him to linger in her presence on one knee before the hearth, long after he had replenished the logs, or furbished the brasses, that he might listen to her wise counsels, and answer her questions about his experience at sea.

Our joy was to steal into the kitchen in the evenings, and help him patch his red flannel shirts,

while he told us stories of the great deep. He gave us all sorts of beautiful shells, and eggs, and wings, and iridescent breasts of sea-gulls; and he made for us tiny boats, and carved whistles and unique toys, such as none of the country shops could produce. His old sea chest was full of rare treasures, which he permitted us to examine, and it smelt deliciously of tar, whose odor to this day is, to us, sweet with happy, old-time recollections.

Often, when our sailor was upon "all fours" washing the kitchen floor, we made him our patient steed, riding upon his back around the circumscribed space, as in an ordinary curriculum. If ever we so far encroached as to excite his anger, he would march toward the dining-room door, with the threat, "Chilun, I shall have to interduce you to your gran'mother." But I cannot recall a time when he really presented us as culprits before this lenient judge. With his fingers upon the latch, he relented from his purpose, and, forgiving us, returned to our amusement.

I wonder where these two "faithful servants" are in the "Land beyond the river"! The Master knows just what was their light in this world, and

how they followed it. Certainly they “ordered themselves lowly and reverently to all their betters” while on earth, and that humility is one of the required virtues.

’Tis true, Tom used to say, when exhorted to go to the place of public worship: “I can’t afford to get a new suit o’ close an’ run the risk o’ gettin’ ’ligion.” Yet I remember him generally on Sunday mornings upon a high seat in the West gallery, with face and attitude of strict attention to the holy service and sermon, and I believe that in the temple above he will have joy and felicity.

He clung with tenacity to his Indian blood, and took long walks to the Charlestown Reservation to see one of the Narragansett squaws, bringing home to us pretty trifles of her bright bead work, and braided baskets, and he never deserted for any other damsel, his own true love.

CHAPTER II.

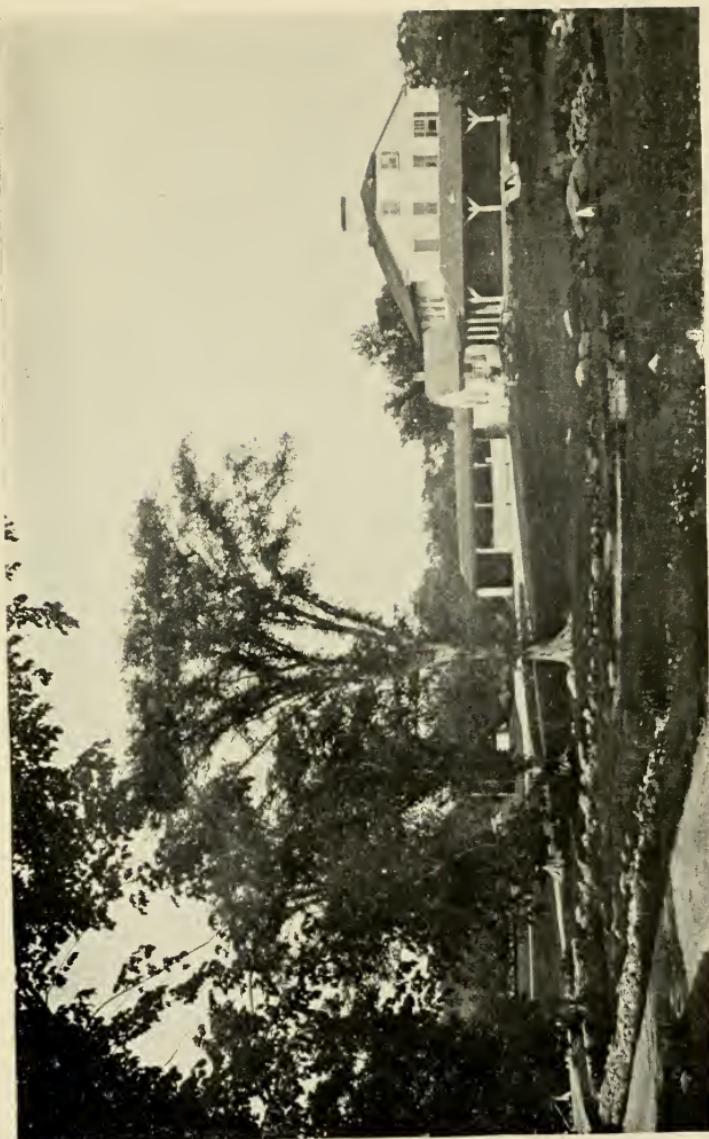
The Old Block House.

OLD VENICE, in the eleventh and twelfth centuries, had her “strong castles” to protect her from the “Dalmatian pirates.”

Our village began with this fortress against the wily and savage natives of the new country.

It was also a “trading station” with the Indians, and a dwelling place for Richard Smith and his family. He came from Gloucestershire, England, in the latter part of the reign of Charles I., “because of religious persecution.”

For a while he dwelt in Taunton, Plymouth Colony, but not finding there the liberty of conscience that he desired, he purchased thirty thousand acres of land of the Narragansett Indians, and, floating timber from Taunton to a bend of the Cove, about a mile to the northwest of our now



BLOCK HOUSE, WICKFORD, R. I.
Erected 1638. (pp. 28-29.)

populous village, in 1639, put up, in the thickest of the barbarians, the first house builded among the Indians of this neighborhood.

I do not know what he paid for his large tract; but, from the dealings of the white settlers generally, with their red brethren, I infer that the bargain must have been greatly in his favor.

It is true, that the land, so free to the Aborigines, had not the value it now possesses, and perhaps it is wrong to call the spirit of the early settlers grasping, or avaricious.

Roger Williams speaks of this pioneer of our village, as "a most acceptable inhabitant, and prime leading man in Taunton," and also testifies that in his new habitation, "he kept possession coming and going himself, children and servants, and had quiet possession of his houses, lands, and meadow, and there, in his own house, with much serenity of soul and comfort, he yielded up his spirit to God, the Father of Spirits."

From Greene's *History of the United States* I quote concerning Smith's possessions: "Having rendered himself popular among the Indians, by living with them some fifteen years, he then ob-

tained a lease for sixty years of all the land which forms the present site of Wickford, and reaching as far as the Annaquaticket river. A few years afterward he extended this lease for one thousand years, at the same time increasing largely his lands, and, in 1660, he was able to satisfy the Indians that a reversionary title, to vest at the end of a thousand years, was of little value, and obtained of them an absolute deed of his whole broad dominions."

Smith also had possessions in New Amsterdam, where he frequently sojourned, and where his daughter Catherine met the fate that associated another noted family with this ancient "fortress" and "trading house," and "castle" in Narragansett.

It is said that "he and his brother John, and others, received from Director Kieft a patent of 13,000 acres of land at Maspeth, Long Island, with power to build villages and churches, subject only to the sovereignty of the Dutch West India Company." During the greater part of twenty years Richard Smith is said to have resided in Newtown, Long Island.

The block house is still standing, and is well preserved, the timber of the ancient structure out-lasting many generations of our modern buildings. It is a notable feature in the landscape and has many historic associations to render it an object of interest to present and future tourists.

Under its venerable roof Roger Williams and Smith had many an important interview regarding the affairs of the Colony. Here also the “King’s Commissioners” from the United Colonies met in 1683, and evinced an arbitrary authority which the Rhode Island Legislature refused to acknowledge.

Assembled at Wickford, about a mile away, this opposing body “ordered the Sergeant at Arms, with his trumpet and at the head of a troop of horse, by loud proclamation, to prohibit the Commissioners from keeping Court in any part of this Jurisdiction.” Imagine the indignant procession, moving triumphantly up “the Lane,” as the upper part of Main Street was then called, and along the road to “Smith’s Castle,” and so impressing and intimidating the Commission that “it adjourned to Boston to pursue its deliberations.”

The jurisdiction of the “King’s Province” was the subject of this Council, or Court. “In 1685, Joseph Dudley, as President, by Royal commission, of Maine, New Hampshire, Massachusetts, and the King’s Province, brought together his Council at ‘Smith’s Castle,’ and in the plenitude of authority, established Courts, appointed Magistrates, and, to obliterate every recollection of their former political existence, substituted the town name of Rochester for Kingstown; Haversham for Westerly; and Dedford for Greenwich.”

“Rhode Island, enfeebled by dismemberment, quietly submitted, until the arrest of Andros, when she re-established her authority.”

The “Block House” is large and square, fronting the water. Rabbitt Island furnishes a refreshing green spot not far from the main land, and the Island of Cornelius, farther to the east, is conspicuous, while the village stands out in full view on the southeast, and the Bay, with Canonicut, once Miantonomi’s headquarters and royal residence, are plainly visible.

To see “Smith’s Castle” now, after over two hundred years of change and improvement and

cultivation, one can scarcely imagine its pristine condition, with the tangled natural growth, and the dread proximity of wild beasts and untamed savages, when the brave pioneer ventured to fix here his dwelling.

On a near approach, it presents a fine appearance, though from the road, about forty rods away, one can only discern clearly the upper story and roof. Rounding the turn, toward the old entrance by the red gate, where it is said a traitor was once drawn and quartered, you get a distinct view of the house which is located very near to the salt inlet, and at a sufficient distance from the traveled highway to escape the noise and dust. There have been some innovations upon the primitive structure, but the original timbers are still in the foundation and frame, and the great beams cross the ceiling in the principal rooms. The old wainscoting and deep wooden cornices, and long, narrow mantelpieces and wide fireplaces and big brick oven, bear witness to the antique fashioning, and despite the few changes made by the successors of Mr. Richard Smith, and the partial re-modeling in 1680, after the Indians had tried to destroy it by

fire, there are indubitable proofs of venerable existence. Three times in my life I have visited the place. Once in my childhood, when it was the abode of a beautiful girl, for whom it was dubbed "Enchantment Cove."

Later, I simply stopped outside the premises, attracted by a vision that put to flight all thought of hostile Indians or cruel white men, or any necessity for caution or defence. Hundreds of barnyard fowls were surrounding their owner, who scattered lavishly the golden grain, and in all that region were the evidences of thrift and peace.

Yesterday, I went for a thorough research, in order to substantiate whatever I may record. The courteous resident took me all through the mansion, and gave me such information as she had gathered from tradition, permitting me ocular demonstration as to the number and position of the rooms, with their peculiar arrangement.

It has been said that there was an iron hook in the kitchen beam, where traitors were hung, and that in an upper room were stalls where slaves were confined, with "holds" to which their feet were bound, and that in the cellar was a place of

hiding. But all traces of former terror or barbarity have disappeared, and the great, cheerful chambers, with their charming outlook, are very enticing to visitors, and make them wish for a summer sojourn in this historic fortress.

Down by the water-side east of the house, is the burial place of some of the victims of the “great swamp fight.” There are no indications of a ghostly presence. It is said that the cattle will not eat of the grass that grows upon this spot, but I picked some bright clover blossoms, that were as beautiful and fragrant as though nourished by other than human dust, and as I stood above the broad grave it was difficult to realize the tragedy of the dreadful massacre of a past age.

In the large north room on the ground floor of the “Castle,” the dairy was now kept, and it brought to mind the fact that the wife of Richard Smith gave to Narragansett the famous recipe for Cheshire cheese which became so noted in Rhode Island, and so sought after by all who tasted it.

The front entrance hall is ten or twelve feet square, with staircase running west, north, and east, with two landings before reaching the second

story. Under the northern steps is a low door, with a rude stone flight leading down, perhaps to Avernus. The pitchy darkness frightened me, and deterred me from the descent, which did not impress me as it might have done the Latin poet.

I was satisfied to accept my guide's dictum that there was a small square room in the cellar which possibly was the "hiding place" in the former days of peril.

Two immense square rooms, a dining room, two bed rooms, and a kitchen, are comprised on the ground floor. The second corresponds, with the exception of a kitchen chamber. The garret gives unmistakable proof of antiquity, and, although the solid beams and uprights may endure many years of gnawing, the wood-borers are gradually encroaching in their quiet, persistent way, and are certain to make an obvious impression sooner or later. The outside surroundings are delightful. The salt tide flows in winding course through the grounds to the west, and there is a spring of fresh, cool water for the cattle and domestic fowls, and along the ancient stone walls, wild shrubs and vines grow luxuriantly. There is a recent avenue

to the house, to the south of the old red gate.

From a pamphlet, *Historical, Literary, and Critical*, conducted by Sidney S. Rider, 27 Westminster St., Providence, R. I., 1883, I quote:

“Whilom we went to Wickford, for therein lay the lands staked out by Miantonomi for a trading house for Roger Williams. It was along the banks of the ‘Coweumsquissett,’ and so Williams calls the place by the name of the brook. Hereaway, too, was the famous hostelry, or ‘Block House,’ built by Richard Smith.”

I have elsewhere read that when Roger Williams went as agent to England, he sold his trading house to Smith, who put the timbers into his own building, which was afterward called “Cocumsusset.”

CHAPTER III.

Heirs to “Smith’s Castle.”

FROM Mr. Charles Wilson Opdyke’s valuable Genealogy of the Opdykes of Wessel, Germany, I am enabled to give a thorough knowledge of the association and alliance of this family with the old “Block House,” and with our pretty Western “Venice.”

“Gysbert Opdyke, son of Lodowick Opden Dyck, and Gertrude Van Wesek, came to New Amsterdam before 1638. He was allowed by the Dutch so much land for every acre surveyed, and thus became possessed of much property in New York and on Long Island.” He owned a residence in New York, on Stone Street; the whole of Coney Island; a farm at Hempstead, Long Island, and another at “Cow Neck.”

Records in the Albany State Library prove that

the present Coney Island was, in Gysbert's day, composed of three islands, the easternmost of which was for many years known as "Gysbert's Island," but all three were covered by the patent to him.

"The position and size of his New York lot are shown on a map published in Valentine's manual of New York for 1857, page 498."

"The lot must have been at least ten rods deep, 57 x 500. The road was among the earliest streets built upon. Stone Street was once called Brouwer Street, two or three breweries having been erected upon it. It was the line of the first road laid out from the Fort to the present Peck Slip Ferry. It was one of the best streets in town. It was the first street in New York paved with stone, which gave it its subsequent change of name."

In 1638, Gysbert Opdyke was Commissary of "Fort Good Hope," the present site of Hartford, Conn.

In 1640, he returned to Germany, but came back to New Amsterdam in 1642, drawn by strongest attractions.

The New York Dutch Church records, "Sept.

24, 1643, married, Gysbert Opten Dyck, a bachelor from Wessel, Germany, and Catherine Smith, a Maiden from old England."

The ceremony took place in the Dutch Stone Church, erected in 1642, within the Fort at the Battery.

Some Dutch manuscript land papers say that among others entertained at a tavern party, "were Gysbert Opdyke and his new wife, Catrina, whose cheeks shone rosy red through the snow-white skin."

In 1645, Gysbert and his father-in-law, Richard Smith, Sr., were among the eight representatives for the Dutch Colonists.

In the worst period of the Indian Manhattan war, Gysbert and his wife Catrina Smith, lived in his house on Stone Street, within a few hundred yards of the battery on one side, and of the East River on the other, with unbroken breezes from river to river, open view of the Dutch ships coming and going on the bay, and pleasant pasture fields at the rear. How we would like to have sat on his wooden stoop, under the shade of an old forest tree; while the drums beat at the Fort, the children

fished on the grassy bank of the river, and Gysbert smoked his pipe, and told sadly of the departed glory of old Wessel! But gone now, and long forgotten is the glory of Stone Street. Trade reached it, and then left it, and few now know the street, short, curved, and lined with brick warehouses, bearing closed iron shutters; it is in mid-day as quiet as a street of tombs.

“June 10th, 1646, Gysbert’s first son, Lodowick, was baptized in the Dutch Church of New Amsterdam, in the presence of his father and his grandfather, Richard Smith, and the fiscal de la Montagne, who acted as sponsors. His childhood and youth were spent at New Amsterdam, in his father’s house in Stone Street, or next the City Hall, and on Long Island, about Hempstead and Newtown.”

There is a curious entry among the New Amsterdam Council minutes, concerning Lodowick’s maternal aunt, Joan, who made a romantic runaway match with Thomas Newton, at Flushing, Long Island.

“April 3rd, 1648, William Harek, Sheriff of Flushing, for having solemnized a marriage be-

tween Thomas Newton, widower, and Joan, daughter of Richard Smith, against her parents' consent, and contrary to law, fined 600 guilders, dismissed from office, and marriage annulled."

The same date: "Sentence Thomas Newton for having married Miss Smith aforesaid, fined 300 guilders, and to have the marriage again solemnized after three proclamations."

A daughter, Abigail, the product of this union, became the wife of her cousin, Lodowick, and from these sprang our Rhode Island branch.

After the death of Richard Smith, Sr., in 1666, his grandson is heard of in the old Block House, where Gysbert and his children no doubt came to take possession of their portion of the inheritance.

Though Richard Smith, Jr., occupied it during his life, "Smith's Castle," with its broad acres, eventually fell to Lodowick Updyke, a portion coming from his grandfather Smith, another from his uncle Richard Smith, Jr., and a third from his union with Abigail Newton.

From Mr. Daniel Berkeley Updyke of Boston, Mass., I have obtained the following correct genealogy:

The children of Gysbert Updyke and Catherine Smith:

Elizabeth—married a Wightman, some of whose descendants are now living in a venerable mansion in our Venice, on the corner of Main and Fowler Streets; Lodowick—married his cousin Newton; Richard—killed in the “Great Swamp Fight”; Sarah—married a Whitehead; Daniel—died in London, England; James—unmarried, died in Wickford, 1729.

The children of Lodowick Updyke and Abigail Newton:

Richard—married an Eldred; Daniel—married three times: Arnold, Jenkins, Wanton.

This Daniel was the Attorney General of the Rhode Island colony for twenty-four years, and also held other responsible offices. He practised law in Newport, R. I., where he was held in high esteem as an honorable literary gentleman.

Esther—sister of the Attorney General, married a Fosdick; Abigail—married a Cooper; Sarah—married a Goddard, the progenitor of our distinguished Rhode Island Goddards; Martha—remained unmarried.

The children of Daniel the 1st, Attorney General, were:

Lodowick—the second of the American stock, who was said to have been “in personal appearance tall and fine-looking. He always wore a wig and small clothes, and resembled George the third.” His wife, Abigail Gardiner, was a niece of the Rev. Dr. and Mrs. McSparran, of worthy memory. Mary—married Judge Cole; Gilbert and Wilkins—died young.

The 2nd Lodowick’s children were:

Daniel—the 3rd, who was also Attorney General of Rhode Island, and died in 1842; he married an Arnold. James—unmarried; he lived until 1855, and received a pension for his services in the War of 1812. He was a genial, but eccentric man. We knew him well when we were little children, and were greatly amused by his courtly manner toward his favorite in our group, whom he frequently addressed as “Miss Carolina Adelina Matilda Cook Brenton, Daughter of the illustrious house of Brunswick.”

He is said to have given the lot in our village for the old town house, which stands deserted in

the upper part of Main Street. It was built in 1807, and served both for civil and religious purposes. I was told by an aged resident of the town that "the conditions of the gift were, that the town house should be used in turn by any Christian body that needed it, and that for all time;" but I observe that it is now simply a storehouse, rented for whatever purpose the lessee may choose.*

James had sisters and brothers:—

Anstis—married a Lee; Mary—married a Munday; Abigail—married a Reynolds; Sarah—married a Hagan; Lydia—married a Crary; Lodonwick, 3rd—married a Baker; Alfred—married a Reynolds; Gilbert—married a Dennis; Wilkins—married a Watson.

The Hon. Wilkins Updyke was born in the Block House, June 8th, 1784. He resided for some time at "Tower Hill," South Kingstown; then for several years in North Kingstown, and finally moved to Kingstown village, where he died in 1867. "He was a nobleman in personal appearance and in the generous humanity of his nature.

*Since writing the above, the town has granted the use of this old building to the members of the G. A. R., and has repaired and improved it for their occupancy.

In the House of Lords he would have been among his peers, but he did not need titles nor broad acres, to give distinction. Wherever he sat was the head of the table, and he would have entertained a royal Duke at his house in South Kingstown, without any sense of social inferiority."

I recollect meeting him in my early girlhood, at a dinner in Wakefield, where I was impressed by his genial manner, and his wonderful gift of eloquence, as he led the conversation.

His *History of the Narragansett Church* from which I, and others who have written on kindred themes, have gathered valuable information, has conferred inestimable benefit upon the State of Rhode Island, as it embraces the Genealogy of many of her noted families, as well as a true sketch of the religious status.

The Hon. Wilkins Updyke's daughter Isabella, was the last of the Updykes born in the Block House, in 1812. She married a Virginia Randolph. Mr. Updyke's son, Caesar, married an Adams of Massachusetts.

His grandson, Daniel Berkeley Updyke, is living in Boston, and has a zealous interest in the

home and church of his ancestors. He inherits many valuable papers, which it is hoped he may soon give to the world.

I am particular in a minute and correct mention of the Updyke family, because it had so prominent a part in the early settlement of our beautiful Venice, and because prior to the permanent attachment of the name "Wickford," the little hamlet was by everybody called "Updyke's Newtown."

About 1709, Lodowick Updyke laid out village streets and lots, less than a mile from the old Block House, and began to sell plots to purchasers. "Even as late as 1777, the Assembly granted a charter to the 'Newtown Rangers,' a Company doing duty at 'Updyke's Newtown,' although the Colonial Records, as far back as 1663, say that the town is for the future called 'Wickford.' "

There are several reasons given for its present name. Some say it is from "Wick's Ford," so called from Mr. Lodowick Updyke, the former owner of the land upon which it stands.

From the *Narragansett Historical Register* I quote: "The village was formerly an island, and

the place of entrance was called ‘The Ford,’ afterward ‘Wick’s Ford.’ ”

“The teamsters who drew timber down to ‘The Point,’ now Baker’s Wharf, at the terminus of Main Street, complained how bad the Ford was at night. It was in the road close to where Mr. Shippee’s (now Stafford’s) blacksmith shop is,” and near where the Methodists have built their chapel.

“In order to remedy the gloom, they furnished a lamp which consisted of a wick drawn through an iron ring, and elevated to burn, the other end drawing from a vessel of grease, or oil, in an open pot, which contrivance was called a ‘Kill Devil.’ In time it came to be spoken of as ‘The Ford at the Wick,’ and afterward as *Wickford*. ”

There were no bridges in the early settlement of the country; horses and men crossed the streams in the shallow places, over what was called a “Corduroy,” that is a construction of trees or logs placed side by side. The water from the Coves in Wickford met at high tide, and surrounded the village, so that before the spanning of the channel from that part of “Elamsville” now called Champ-

lin Street, to "The Lane," now West Main, the children had to cross in boats to the Academy School. Where the Middle bridge now is, the land on either side sloped to the shore.

Not until the fierce September gale of 1815 had swept away the first simple structure, was this one built by lottery, to take its place; though over another part of the channel. The original narrow bridge was not rebuilt, but the road where the Ford and "Kill Devil" used to be, is so filled in that it furnishes a stable foundation, and the water is kept within convenient bounds; but it may be that we perpetuate the crossing in our village name.

I copy the "Memorandum of a journey from New London to Boston" drawn up in July, 1704, by one of the Winthrops:

"After having received a visit from Ninierraft, ye sachem of ye country, we stood along, breakfasted at an inn, four miles off, kept by one Capt. Dibble. After we had baited our horses, kept along; came to Wickford about noone, stopt there till Monday, it being very hott. In ye morning, just as ye day broke, we set out. Came to 'Elizabeth Spring' at sunrise, a place so called from my

grandmother's drinking at it in her travels up to Connecticut in ye beginning of ye country. It issues out under ye bank of ye cove, at ye root of a large chestnut tree. Wickford also had its name from her, it being ye place of her nativity in old England."

She was the daughter of Edward Reed, County of Essex, and grandmother of the Hon. C. Winthrop. It is said that she visited the Block House in 1645, and suggested to Roger Williams and Richard Smith the future name for the village.

From the Rev. Daniel Goodwin, for some years rector of the new church of St. Paul's, Narragansett, I have received the following letter with regard to the English village, from which our own is said to have been named:

"I visited Wickford, in Essex, England, when I was abroad in 1877, and found it a pretty village in the center of an agricultural region apart from the sea. A very ancient church had been recently taken down, and a new one built on the same foundation, with the preservation of some of the old features. Many of the tiles on the new church were green with the moss of ages, gathered upon

the old roof. The carved wooden ceiling of the old Choir had been introduced into the new one, and was said to have previously served as the ceiling of the Refectory of a monastery the other side of the Thames—before the Reformation. It was very beautiful, apparently of oak, nearly blackened by time. I visited the rectory, and saw the rector, Rev. H. H. Lukin, who gave me a copy of the baptismal record of ‘Elizabeth Read,’ afterward wife of John Winthrop, Jr., Governor of Connecticut, and eldest son of the ancient Governor of Massachusetts. She was the one who, travelling through the State ‘in ye beginning of ye country (she died in 1672) visited at the “Newtown” of the “Updykes” and gave it the name of Wickford.’

“These quotations are from a letter still in existence in the archives of the Winthrop family, written by John Winthrop, the grandson of Elizabeth, in July, 1704. The record of her baptism is as follows: ‘Elizabeth Read, daughter of Edmund Read, was baptized November 27th, 1614.’ I saw the old parish register. It is bound in white vellum, and looks strikingly like the one of St. Paul’s,

Narragansett. The name of Read is still a common one in Wickford, England, and I saw the name on many ancient stones in the old church-yard, among others, ‘Elizabeth Read.’

“Elizabeth Spring, at Potowomut Station, over which the late Dr. Eldredge placed a substantial memorial tablet, was so called for Mrs. Winthrop on account of her drinking at it, as attested in her grandson’s letter, and in one of Roger Williams of June, 1675.”

As to the present name of our village, it seems to me very natural that Wyck’s Ford should eventually merge into Wickford; but as we speak the combined name it is pleasant to associate with it the memory of sweet Elizabeth Winthrop, of the village across the ocean, and Lodowick Updyke, born on our own soil, and thoroughly identified with every interest and improvement in the foundation and growth of the place.

In the early settlement, “every new comer must submit to a year’s probation before being allowed to settle, and must find some one to be security that he would not be a town charge.”

It is perhaps to this wise restriction that the

village owes its long indemnity from ills to which other less protected communities are subject.

A century or more after the village had grown to quite a large population, the "Updyke mansion," as the "Castle" came to be called, was sold by the Hon. Wilkins, in 1816, to Captain Joseph Congdon, and later passed into the possession of Mr. Rathbone, Mr. Chapin, and finally became the property of Mrs. Babbit of Pomfret, Connecticut, and has been sometimes occupied by a tenant, as a dairy farm.

The original broad area is greatly circumscribed, by sales and divisions among the numerous heirs, some of whom still hold lands and houses in various parts of the township.

Conspicuous among the close friends and admirers of the Hon. Daniel Updyke, the Attorney General, was Dean Berkeley, the celebrated philosopher and writer, who, after some years of travel in Italy and France, set sail from England for Rhode Island, where he landed in Newport Harbor, January 23rd, 1729. Swift's "Vanessa" had bequeathed him four thousand pounds. He bought a farm adjoining the residence of the Rev. Mr.

Honeyman, rector of Trinity Church, about three miles from the city, and now in Middletown.

The “Hanging Rocks” were within a half mile from his home, and in this favorite retreat he used to sit while writing his “Minute Philosopher” and other literary works. There is a natural sheltered alcove where his old-fashioned wooden chair was placed, and where he spent many hours in outward and inward contemplation. The old chair became the possession of the Rev. Gurden S. Coit of Connecticut, himself a scholar and author.

Dean Berkeley’s verses “On the prospect of planting Arts and Learning in America” are well known, and often quoted. He was a man of high moral and intellectual ambitions, a fine preacher, a genial companion and a sterling friend.

For nearly three years he remained in Newport, before returning to the old country. On his departure he gave “White Hall” to Yale College, New Haven, and also a library of 880 volumes, together with a portrait, painted by Smibert, the artist, who accompanied him to America. This picture hangs in the “Hall of the Alumni,” in

Yale College, and is thus described to me by one of the students:

“The picture is about eight feet long by six feet wide. It was painted by John Smibert in 1729, and contains figures of the Dean on the right, in cassock and bands; four other men on the left, and two women seated in the middle—one of whom holds a child scarcely larger than a doll, but a perfect little lady in face and costume: I have not been able to find out exactly who these persons are. It is quite impossible to guess, from any marks of age, for the youngest looking men have the greyest wigs, and I should not dare to say whether they were sons, or brothers, or one a brother-in-law! The women look so much alike that I imagine they must be sisters.”

As the Biography marries the Dean “in 1728 to a daughter of the Right Honorable John Foster, Speaker of the Irish House of Commons,” we may infer that he is father only to the baby in the mother’s arms, and that this is the little son, born in 1729. “Lucia,” who was born afterwards, was destined to be left in her lowly bed in Trinity Church yard, Newport, R. I., in 1731. The men

in the painting, it seems to me, may be some of the friends who accompanied the Dean to the Narragansett country.

In 1733, he sent a fine organ to Trinity Church, Newport. It is surmounted by a crown in the centre, supported by two mitres, one on either side—and these escaped vandalism when some other royal emblems were destroyed, after the British Army had evacuated the Island in 1779.

In 1734, Queen Caroline, as a special mark of favor, conferred upon Dean Berkeley the Bishopric of Cloyne, which he held for nearly twenty years.

His name is not out of place in this record, associated as he was with the Pioneer house of our village, and also with other suburban localities of which I shall later make mention.

Pope ascribed to him, “every virtue under heaven,” and Atterbury wrote of him, “So much understanding, knowledge, innocence, and humility I should have thought confined to angels, had I never seen this gentleman.” He was said to be very “tolerant in religious opinions, which gave him a great and deserved popularity with all de-

nominations. All sects rushed to hear him; even the Quakers, with their broad-brimmed hats, came and stood in the aisles."

CHAPTER IV.

The Village Proper.

ON the streets, the detached houses, with their well-kept lawns, and gardens, and overshadowing trees, present a rural and thrifty aspect, and give one the happy consciousness that no wolf of poverty lurks at any door. In the days of my childhood, one could walk from end to end of the quiet hamlet, and meet only the familiar citizens, and hear no sound but nature's music, the hum of insects, the song of the birds, the rippling waters, and the wind in the tree tops.

Now the influx of summer visitors has changed the place. There are signs of life and wakefulness and progress. The buzz of factories falls on the ear, the whirr of the cars and the steamboat's whistle break the silence, and the coming and



VIEW ON MAIN STREET, WICKFORD, R. I. (PP. 58-59.)

going of travelers on the favorite route from New York and Boston to Newport, keep busy the hitherto inert and slumbering village.

Yet, despite the somewhat altered conditions, there is an advantage over most resorts, in that solitude and reverie are still possible to such as love quiet and reflection. In particular localities, there remain the same rural features, with the same dreamy environments, as in the long ago.

Only last month, I stood on some of the spots that were familiar to me in the years gone by, and it seemed as if I had been asleep for a moment, and had suddenly awakened amid the old familiar scenes, so truly had the landscape "held its own."

The Main Street, and that crossing the middle bridge to Elamsville, now Brown Street, look very much as they used to do, and the scattered houses along the shore, some of them, are as they were a half century and more ago. There is one small white cottage, especially, that recalls to me the time when the modern *Gondola* was drawn up to the very steps, and the owner went on board from what I deemed his beautiful castle.

The tide makes up to the stone parapet, and

sometimes submerges the little strip of made ground.

Strolls and drives about the shore and along the country roads, give a blessed sense of freedom which one cannot have in fashionable, crowded thoroughfares, and those who have once enjoyed the delights of this beautiful, peaceful village, are certain to return to it again and again. To children and young people, it is the perfection of happiness, with its enticing pleasures of land and sea. "Little Lord Fauntleroy" came, with other Washingtonians, to spend here a few summer months, and a more rollicking, merry set of boys, as they gamboled in the waves, or frolicked in the green woods, one could not wish to see.

I recall this home of my childhood and youth, when as yet no stranger's feet had traversed its simple streets, and my own had pressed no other soil. How dear its dust! How precious every stone, and blade of grass, and shrub, and tree! How charming the white houses, scattered here and there and holding within their walls the beloved people who comprised all my world! Does a wider knowledge ever fully compensate for the

satisfaction which we realize before we go away from the place of our birth, and the friends of our earliest affection and trust?

A selfish feeling of regret for the removal of ancient landmarks, and for what we call the desecration of venerated objects, may at times possess us, but true philanthropy must make us desire, and seek, the general good, and rejoice in every advance and improvement, whatever personal sadness may be occasioned by changes, or innovations.

Imbued with this spirit, I can note with pleasure the cars winding around the Cove over which we used to go for huckleberries and blackberries, that grew thickly where the iron horse now gallops. Prior to 1840, there was no bridge from Elamsville to the opposite land, where the new town hall and the Episcopal Rectory, and the Cold Spring Hotel, and many attractive residences have risen like magic. Either we had to make a long circuit over the road past the Academy and the old Distillery, by the Briar Reynolds house, where Dr. Soule now lives, in order to reach the John Sherman place, since the Hon. David Baker's, or the Alfred Reynolds' habitation, or Duck Cove, or the

Light House on the Point; or we skimmed across the water in a skiff, a mode of transportation which we greatly preferred to the modern way.

In those good times there were no obstructions to the view from the "Old Doctor's," our grandfather's, house. His possessions extended from the upper wharf to the "Academy Cove." The fragrant East garden led down to the water, and neither "Shears" nor coal-shed disfigured the premises, or shut off the beautiful vision of land and sea. We could watch the vessels afar off, rounding Canonicut Point, and nearing the lower pier, and, when the daily packet arrived from Newport and disembarked her passengers, we could, as we stood at a northeast window of the house, through a field glass distinguish the faces of the people as they started to walk up the Main Street.

We fished from the wharf, with black Tom to bait our hooks and see that no harm should befall us; or we roamed by the western shore gathering shells and snails, and the pretty blue Marsh Rosemary or "Sea Heath" in its season; or poking at the soldier crabs as they scrambled from their

holes, or the bivalves that burrowed in the mud. Or we went sleighing in midsummer, on the old wooden "Settle" in our grandfather's drug-store, the thick buffalo robe covering us, and the double row of bells making silvery music.

It was fun for us to help pound, or macerate, the drugs, in the iron mortar, with the heavy pestle, and to see the transformation into nauseous pills, or to scrape the hartshorn, or work the diacilion salve, like molasses candy, and cool it in long, smooth rolls. Sometimes we were permitted to heat a thin-bladed knife and spread a plaster, and then we felt quite ready for a diploma, as thoroughly-equipped M.D.'s. Perhaps we had as high an estimate of the preparation needed for the practice of the profession as some physicians have, who take the lives of other human beings into their hands, and are full medical practitioners.

The sweetest knowledge that we obtained of drugs was the "manna," or "angels' food," that we took from the bottle behind the counter. We really thought at first that we were feasting on what refreshed the Children of Israel in the Wilderness.

There were but three houses on the “Ville,” when in 1804 Dr. Shaw built there. The Makenzie house and the Watson and Spink habitations, are still standing on Champlain Street.

They called the Watson’s the “Batty House” in my childhood. It had deteriorated into a tenement for poor people, and I recollect carrying food often to the different rooms. Once I dropped a dish of string beans upon the ground, but quickly scooped them up, and, without scruple, delivered them to a young girl whose hands were like birds’ claws. The old house has been restored to its primitive glory, and is owned by prosperous and happy residents.

The small place *vis a vis*, has for me some tragic associations, which I cannot easily forget. The tyranny of a brute nature over the weak and helpless and dependent, always excited me to anger, and the mere rumor of acts of violence committed by a giant of a man toward a delicate woman, so outraged every tender instinct of my young spirit, that the influence lingers to this day, though the little home has for years been sanctified by a changed and gentle presence.

Champlain Street was a grassy way along the unobstructed shore to the Academy hill, until Captain Jacob Smith, of Newport, cast covetous eyes upon a charming plot, and erected a cottage, now owned by Governor Gregory.

Then the “young Doctor” Shaw further encroached upon my cherished and free domain, and shut in another strip of the pretty Cove, and made a home that we call The Lilacs, and that is delightful to visit, though it does not quite compensate for the loss of the old pleasure along the open shore. To a certain degree there is an improvement upon nature, with the choice shrubs and vines, and trees and flowers. The perfume of locust blossoms greets me as I write, and all around are signs of highest cultivation.

I recollect a very pretty early morning scene of last August, as I sat at a northwest window. The “cobs” had their filmy webs spread out upon the lawn, a marvelous display. There was a regular line of them, white and glistening, along the side of the terrace, and there were some on the tops of the great box trees. On the Cove the fog was “thick enough to cut,” and for awhile hid the water

from my sight. Then, presto! the sun arose, and the veil was lifted, and there appeared a translucent mirror, with houses and trees, reflected upside down, and heavens with moving clouds in the depths below, as well as overhead.

What a wonderful nature! It is not singular that men grasp the best localities for the foundation of their human habitations. This street is now lined with dwellings on the west, and the opposite side has here and there a house. Still it is verdant and rural, and the dust and noise of the more thickly settled and traveled parts do not reach it.

Washington Academy, a little to the southwest of The Lilaes, was chartered in 1800, and was once one of the best Institutions in the State of Rhode Island. It is now inclosed and is still valued as a place of learning. It occupies a hill that slopes to a beautiful cove, and has, from the summit, the most extensive and charming view in all the town; “water, water, everywhere,” and a most entrancing landscape. How often we little children used to wander over the forest-covered premises, amid violets and May pinks and trailing arbutus and the

sweet fern and huckleberry and bayberry bushes, with roses contrasting brightly with the glossy green!

Or we would picnic under the shining oaks, and in our chatter, rival the squirrels that ran up and down from their holes in the tree trunks, as busy as though alone in these pleasant wilds.

Many a brilliant scholar has gone out from the Washington Academy to do honor in other localities, to this *Alma Mater* of our modern Venice. Bishop, Professor, Judge, Governor, Mayor, and Senator, can look back, with grateful pride, to its fostering care and nurture. Mr. Elam (from whom our "Ville" took its early name) was a Newport gentleman of means. He had a decided interest in this school, and would, no doubt, have largely endowed it if it had yielded to his wish that it should bear his name, but "the Father of his country" prevailed in the minds of the Trustees, and perhaps the Institution gained in fame what it lost in fortune.

I wish that portion of the village south of the Middle Bridge could still be called Elamsville,

instead of Brown, and Champlin, and Phillips Streets.

Despite his diaappointment, Mr. Elam made some worthy donations to the Academy, besides a valuable Encyclopedia. In my mother's day there were some noted classical instructors in the school, and some of the ambitious young ladies vied with the young men in the advanced studies, thus fitting themselves to train, in after years, their own children, who might otherwise have failed to receive such advantages of intellectual culture as their station demanded, and their minds craved.

Thus does a kindly Providence anticipate and care for our future needs and desires.

Gregory's Mill had no place in the primitive Elamsville. There was a shipyard with ship-building carried on in this spot, as well as in several other convenient localities near the water, for Wickford was once the next commercial port in Rhode Island to Newport, and many a vessel laden with Narragansett products went out from our wharves, and from Narragansett Ferry, to the West Indies and South America, and the Southern and Eastern colonies along the coast.

I used to look across from the southeast windows of my grandfather's house to the point of land where the rectory children now play under the mammoth trees, and fancy it resembled in its conformation the western shore of Africa. The association is lost by the new surroundings. A road was opened in 1840, and, in 1888, the new iron structure, with carriage privilege, superceded the narrow wooden foot bridge, and fine houses and cultivated gardens cover the old plot across the water.

The factory on the hither side is not an attractive feature, aesthetically regarded; but there are considerations of enterprise and helpfulness, that outweigh the mere gratification of sentiment, and I suppose one ought to rejoice in the smoke and noise that bring comfort and thrift to many otherwise needy families.

The sloop *Resolution*, in which Captain David Baker so often wafted us across the bay to Newport, is said to have been built in 1816 on the premises now owned by Mr. James Greene, and was launched in the Cove at flood tide. Planks were removed from the middle of the bridge that

connected Elamsville with what is now Bridge Street, for the passage of the sloop to the lower wharf, whence it had its daily embarkation for years. Steam navigation had not then begun to stir the waters of our beautiful bay that has been, by many, likened to the Bay of Naples. The first steamboat seen in Providence was the *Fire Fly*, in 1817. The trial trip of a steamboat between Newport and New York was in 1822. The common mode of transportation by sailing vessels, or sloops, prevailed in our waters until the *Eolus* began her regular trips to Newport after the branch railroad from the Wickford junction was built, and this route became the favorite way from Boston and New York. The *General* now goes back and forth over the bay four times at least, in a day.

The old *Resolution* is a battered hulk on sands of the shore, but she will always live in the hearts of her passengers. Many an excursion have I had on her deck, after she had plowed the waves for years! What a mongrel company she carried—ladies and gentlemen bent on pleasure; small fruit venders, intent on profit; inland people, whose peculiar ways were as strange to us as would be the

presence of foreign emigrants; yet always sunny faces and sunny hearts, that made the trip merry and glad! At "the haven where we would be" there were great attractions. The "Old Mill," Fort Adams with its subterranean passages, the beaches with foaming billows, etc., etc.

In our home, twelve miles away, we could hear the strong diapason of the ocean waves, heralding a coming storm, and we loved to draw near and gambol among them, when they were subdued, and made gentler music.

To me, one of the most attractive objects in our village was the Lighthouse, on the neck of land across from the lower wharf. It was a favorite project of one of my ancestors, that the peninsula where this beacon stood, should be called "India Point," and given up solely to shipping exports.

A new light farther out in the channel now warns the ships from the rocks. The old one is yet in existence and is taking a well-earned rest. In the years gone by, many a sailor hailed with joy the bright beams from its faithful lantern, and we children peered through the fog and gloom, with a sense of comfort and protection, as we thought of

inbound vessels, and saw the never failing glow. It was our rare privilege to mount occasionally to the cupola, and watch the keeper as he trimmed the lamps. We realized something of his great responsibility when he spoke to us of human lives saved, or lost, through his care or neglect.

Sometimes, especially in the September months, the wind was fearful in its strength and velocity, and the waters raged furiously, threatening another gale like that of 1815.

We had learned from our grandmother how a sloop had, by the waves, been lifted up over the lower pier, and had run its bowsprit through the window of a house, and how the people were taken in boats from the second story of the dwellings near the wharf, and placed in safety. The impression of her recital lasted with us, and when the autumn equinoctial came, we donned our warm wraps and went to the upper part of our father's garden, in order that the dreaded overflow of the tides might not reach us.

This maternal relative told us much about the old-time localities and people, that have either changed or passed away.

Bush Hill was once thickly covered with shrubs, and vines, and trees. In my childhood it was but a grassy slope, with a few old oaks, and a fresh water pond at the base, on either side. We used to go with our father, in the early morning, to this elevation, to see the sun rise, and to "skip" stones over the water below.

On the edges of the ponds, there grew the ground nut, the sweet bulbous root of a coarse grass; and the pungent flag root; and the velvety brown cat-tails. Big frogs sat croaking on the stones near the border, or amid the water plants. Nearly all the beautiful features are spoiled now, by the digging away the hill for sand; but there remains one little fresh lake, where the cows still slake their thirst, and the wild birds go to drink.

Close by, is a gambrel roofed cottage, where the old men and women whom I knew, were, in their childhood, taught the rudiments of book knowledge, and where cat skins were transformed into pretty muffs. Afterward, it came into the possession of somebody who wove carpets, and delighted little people with the gift of bright thrums, cut from the warp. To perch up beside this good old

dame on the broad seat of her loom, and watch the swift shuttle as it flew back and forth, was among the most charming of our childish joys. The thump, thump, of the board that pressed tightly the woof, was music to our ears, and the growing fabric a mystery indeed.

Many times has the old house changed hands, until now it has come to be the palace of a Queen, and the abode of a princess. "Fairy rings" are beside the door, and the frequent "Bouncing Bet," or "Spanish Pink," grows wild among the grass, and I never turn often enough into the lane that leads to the royal domains, where the sceptre is always graciously held out to welcome me.

The second lane, at right angles with the first, is fast filling with habitations, and becoming a street. It was, in the long, long ago, thick with locust trees, and oaks, and wild vines, and shrubs, so they say, or they have said; and "they" here means the dear old friend who has been my authority as regards localities and aspects, nearly a century and a half gone by.

Later, this wild nature was swept away, and

people made a trodden path to the old church, of which I will speak presently.

In the southeast corner of the second lane, was the village “hearse house,” with the dreadful vehicle that bore the dead to the last resting place. How it used to haunt me with its terrible suggestions! The dingy black velvet pall; the close, black carriage, and all the sad insignia of woe, took my breath away, and seemed to bring to me a living death. That obnoxious building has given place to a glossy leaved white mulberry tree, that awakens brighter thoughts.

CHAPTER V.

Memorable Habitations.

HERE are houses that we call “ancient” in this village of ours—that is not yet three hundred years old. I look upon them with a veneration begotten of my ancestral blood. Our Saxon forebears have in deepest reverence whatever shows the marks of age. The generations in this Western world count for more than those in the old country. We live longer in the same space of time, and therefore compute differently. Some decaying edifices on our main street, seem to me to have been constructed “in the year one,” and I make spiritual obeisance as I pass them. There is a large brown house down on the Point, opposite the old Lighthouse, which was quite a grand dwelling in its prime. It was surrounded by much

ground that has since been encroached upon by adjoining habitations, and it must have been quite an imposing and attractive residence at the time when Mr. Samuel Brenton took possession. His ancestors had, in the Colonial days, owned nearly one third of Newport, comprising "Rocky Farm" and the broad acres where the Lows, and Griswolds, and Russells, and Kings, and Kennedys, and Rutherford's, and Stuyvesants, and Harpers, and Fields, and many other wealthy and noted people, have their fine residences.

As it has been suggested to me by one of the most appreciative of the present occupants of that charming region, to incorporate in these pages some record of the early proprietors, I gather from the sketches by Miss Elizabeth Brenton, which were printed in the *Newport Mercury* of 1853, whatever I think may be of interest to the present generation.

William Brenton left Hammersmith, England, and landed in Boston in 1634. He brought with him a commission from Charles I., which bore the date 1633. The likeness of his Majesty was at the top, and his seal and signature at the

bottom. It was termed a grant, and allowed him to take so many acres to a mile, of all the lands he should survey in the New England Colonies.

In after years this parchment was considered a great piece of antiquity, having been in the Brenton family for more than a century; but it was eventually destroyed by an inconsiderate girl.

William Brenton was made a freeman and select-man of the Colony of Massachusetts, and, in 1635, was chosen Representative, or deputy of the general court of Boston. He was concerned in importations, went extensively into the mercantile line of business, and made large speculations in land.

He came into possession of that broad tract on the Merrimac River, New Hampshire, mentioned in his will, as 10,000 acres. It was long known as Brenton's Farm, and has been constituted the township of Litchfield.

In 1638, Mr. Brenton removed to Newport, Rhode Island. He was associated with Governor Coddington, Nicolas Easton, John Coggshall, John Clarke, Thomas Hazard, Henry Bull, Jeremy

Clarke, and William Dyer, in the formation of a township on the Island of Aquidneck.

Their first object was to choose a spot which would prove the most lucrative landing place. The Harbor of Newport was surveyed. The beauty of scenery, and protecting points around the Bay, first attracted them to the present site of Newport, but finding it a thickly wooded swamp, their attention was directed to Easton's Beach. Here they found no anchorage for craft of any kind, and thought it too open to the ocean, to afford a safe harbor.

Returning to their first choice, they hired the swamp cleared, and the land made firm for building lots.

They named the town Newport. The first street laid out one mile in length, was Thames Street, and lots were measured off first on the Parade, afterwards called Washington Square; and then southerly, crossing Thames, and extending quite to the water.

The houses were made to face the Bay, Brenton's Point and Goat Island, now Fort Walcott,

being in full view, with the adornment of tall forest trees.

The early settlers did not anticipate buildings on the west of the street fronting the water, and as no room was left for such a purpose, it accounts for the narrowness of that thoroughfare.

William Brenton's "Homestead lot," embracing six acres, commenced on what is now Spring Street, extending west to the Bay. On the north it bounded Mary Street, then called the New Lane, and on the south it included the houses afterward owned and occupied by Mr. George Hazard.

In 1638, Mr. Brenton had taken possession of the Peninsula called Brenton's Neck, the boundary of which went in a straight line from the Lime Rocks east, forming the northern boundary of Rocky Farm, and extending quite to the sea shore, on every side, and comprising over two thousand acres of land of the richest soil, and presenting the most picturesque scenery.

A short distance west of the Cove, he had a clearing made, materials brought from Boston, and a brick building erected. It was called the Four Chimney House, and was one hundred and

fifty feet square, and two stories high, with a hall sixteen feet wide, through the center of the main floor. The roof had a railing, seats, and a promenade, commanding a most extensive view. On the south lay the broad Atlantic; north and east the harbor, and the town in its infancy; west the blue waters of Narragansett bay. Around this edifice Mr. Brenton laid out the grounds in meadows, pastures, gardens, and orchards, the enclosures of which were of cut granite three feet wide, and five feet high, with trees bordering them. He named the place after his English home, "Hammersmith," and for many years it was his residence, where most of his children were born, and where he spared no expense in improving nature by art. He divided his farm into "East" and "West."

Over the grazing portion, eleven thousand sheep roamed, and, upon a terrace, Mr. Brenton had a building put up for his herdsmen, who were employed to care for his flocks, and also for the rearing of horses and cattle.

Around the brick house, and in a southwesterly direction, including Castle Hill, the premises were

cultivated for grass, and grain, and vegetables, and poultry, and butter and cheese of superior quality were produced.

The Peninsula, now Fort Adams, was a marsh of wild rose bushes, whortle-berries, and low black-berries.

The hills on the west and south were covered quite to the shore with delightful groves, and merry parties came with their baskets across the bay, for fruit and for pleasant recreation. Castle Hill was noted for the sweet wild strawberries.

Mr. Brenton had temporary quarters in that locality for his numerous employes, who were occupied in the various improvements over his large estate.

On a small peninsula lying oceanward, he had a cottage built for his family shoemaker, for whom he sent to England, good workmen being scarce in the early settlement of the Colonies.

William Brenton's son, Jahleel the Collector, after the death of his father, gave the place to the faithful artisan and his heirs, and it has ever since been called Price's Neck.

It used to be a remarkable locality for fishing

and fowling, and only last summer, when I took the “ten mile drive,” as I approached this peninsula, I saw some sportsmen prone upon the rocks, with their guns pointed to a bevy of ducks.

The Four Chimney House was partly taken down and changed into a smaller edifice, which is now owned by H. F. Batty, Esq. The date of the original structure, 1638, was upon the chimney in the garret. How much of the old building was incorporated with the present I do not know, but it is said that there is no difficulty in tracing the ancient outline upon the ground, and that in the first story can be seen where the posts were sawed off when the house was reduced to a single story with gambrel roof. The premises, however, bear no semblance to a former splendor, when the place was ornamented with gravel walks, flowering trees, folding gates with massive pillars, and gardens where the fir, the box, and the peony, graced the avenues and the velvety green lawns.

William Brenton held the office of first President of Aquidneck from 1640 to 1647; was President of the Colony from 1660 to 1662; Deputy Governor from 1663 to 1666; and Governor from

1666 to 1669, when he retired to a more private life.

He died, leaving the Hammersmith estate to his son Jahleel, who was his executor, and the guardian of the family of young brothers and sisters. In the winter they occupied the town house on Thames Street, and in summer the suburban residence.

He had taken great pleasure and pride in the wild sublimity of the ancestral estate of Hammersmith. The eastern part, where the immense boulders greet you at every step, he called Rocky Farm. He enlarged the terrace where his father had built accommodations for his herdsmen, made an additional room to the house, placed in it a choice library, and spent much of his time in reading and study. In front was a view of the broad Atlantic; on the west, "Lily Pond," then noted for the profusion of wild roses that surrounded it, as well as for the pure lilies upon its surface. Selecting the highest point among the hills near by, he had a clearing made amid the ancient trees, and seats placed for his visitors, and there many happy hours were spent.

Before he left his home for Boston, he sent to England for various fruit trees, which he had planted at Hammersmith. The “Rhode Island Greening” is said to have originated in this country from his importation, and Cherry Valley takes its name from the delicious species of cherries raised by him in that locality.

It must have been very sad to him in after years, to see the decadence of the elegant grounds where his boyhood was spent.

With the Indian outbreak, troublous times had come. The burning of Providence brought terror and apprehension to all the surrounding country.

Preparation was made for the defence of Aquidneck. His Majesty’s military forces were put under command of Major John Cranston. The two large guns, or cannon, which had long stood in the yard of the late Governor Brenton’s town residence, were removed to Portsmouth for the service of the Island, and all things presaged commotion, if not disaster.

In 1694, Jahleel Brenton went to England as agent of the Colony, returning in 1702.

By the death of William III., and the accession

of Queen Anne, Nathaniel Kay became Collector of Customs in Newport.

Mr. Brenton died a bachelor, in 1732, at the age of 77.

Port Adams gives thunderous salutes from the peninsula that was his before the Government had possession.

As if to hold some claim even in death, near the fort is a lowly grave containing his ashes.

From a newspaper article I derive the following:

“Out in the open grounds of Fort Adams, just south of the works, and near to the redoubt, and on a level with the surface of the earth, there lies a slab of blue slate stone that marks the grave of Jahleel Brenton, son of Governor William Brenton. Upon it there are engraved these simple words:

In Memory of
Jahleel Brenton, Esq.
Who died November ye 8th, 1732,
Aged 77 years.

“The letters deeply cut do not show the wear of time, and there is no reason to think that they may not be as distinct at the end of another hun-

dred years as they are to-day. The wonder is, that some team, during all the years that the Fort was building, did not run upon or over the slab to its great injury, for one could hardly see it, hid in the tall grass, until most upon it.

“Happily, danger—to it—of this kind, has been averted through the thoughtful consideration and generosity of Col. George H. Elliot, U. S. E., who, at his own expense, has caused to be built around it a wall, capped with hammered brown stone, with beveled edges, to turn off the water that falls upon it.

“Every lover of Newport, who desires to have its memorials preserved, owes a debt of gratitude to Col. Elliot for so caring for the slab to which our attention has been called.”

How much more do the descendants of Governor William Brenton, who visit as strangers the ancestral domains and rejoice even in this small span of earth, reserved from the broad aeres that have passed into other possession !

By the will of Jahleel the Collector, his estate

fell largely to his nephew, Jahleel, son of William the Second.

This Jahleel married Frances, daughter of Governor Samuel Cranston, and great granddaughter of Roger Williams.

They lived sometimes in their town house, and sometimes at Hammersmith, where they entertained hospitably.

This Jahleel gave the clock that is in Trinity Church steeple, Newport, Rhode Island. He was one of the original members of the Artillery Company, and one of the committee to build the State house. Despite his large landed property, he had not always ready money, and gradually the estate was reduced by various sales.

The beautiful house on Thames Street became the property of Walter Channing, Esq., since which time it has lost its original title, and has been called the Channing House. Commodore Perry occupied it at one time, and his youngest son was born there.

By his courtesy, President Monroe had his residence in it, while on a visit to Newport. Recently it was possessed by the heirs of the late Daniel T.

Swinburne, and for a time leased to the late Major General G. K. Warren, U. S. E., and occupied for Government offices.

The house was very noticeable, standing some twenty rods back from the street, and presenting an antique front. Two noble trees were near the steps, and two at the entrance to the grounds. I once had the courage to enter the ancestral premises, and, through the politeness of the officers in possession, to ascend the quaint staircase, and penetrate as far as the large wainscoted chambers.

Since that time the stalwart trees are missing on Thames Street, and a business structure hides the grand old house, and when I ventured through a strange avenue to the rear of the new block, a little Italian boy ushered me to one of the upper rooms of the once noted house of my forebears, and there sat his mother, with a huge wooden block upon her lap, and a hatchet in her hand, chopping meat for dinner.

Heart sick because of the woeful “changes and chances of this mortal life,” I turned away, content never again to seek the old place, but to hold it henceforth only in memory.

Jahleel Brenton, the second, was the father of Samuel, who married Susan, a daughter of Silas Cook, and removed from Newport to Wickford late in life.

He built the gambrel roofed house that stands on Main Street next above the Wickford National Bank. It was substantially constructed, and retains many of its original features; the low ceilings, narrow wooden mantels over the open fireplaces, and the small panes of glass in the windows. One of these panes in the east parlor is diamond-scratched with the name of Mr. Brenton's daughter, and that of her fiancée, and the date of the etching, 1788.

The present owners have a true appreciation of time-honored places and things, and with almost ancestral pride, preserve and exhibit the peculiar marks in the old house.

“Miss Shippee” took me from attic to basement lately, and she and a courteous brother were enthusiastic over every antiquity.

Behind a fire-board, that had existed from the early days, was an iron crane, still hanging. Great square foreign bricks formed the hearth, and blue

pictured tiles surrounded the fireplace, the designs proving their passage from *outre mer*.

Mr. Brenton's wife died in this house, and through reduction of means he was obliged to relinquish the place, and occupy the large old residence by the water side, at the lower end of East Main Street, where he gave up the ghost.

The Freeborn cottage and other encroachments circumscribed the premises, but it can easily be seen that the old decaying brown house was once monarch in that region.

The Tenant house, on the corner of Main and Fountain Streets, has seen a good old age and stirring events. One of the inhabitants of the village tells me that she has some andirons that were in a fireplace in this house, where some of the British soldiers were roasting a goose which they were obliged to leave on the sudden evacuation of our foreign foes. There must have been Tories in occupation of the premises, and these were probably regaling their transatlantic visitors.

The Whiteman dwelling; the Spencer house; the Robert Eldridge home, now the Wickford House; Mr. Noel Freeborn's, the first brick house

built in the village, and several other frame structures that look as if they had seen the centuries go by, greet us as we go about the streets.

Up at the very head of the main street, once called The Lane, is a place commanding a fine view of the village, and the Bay. It has always impressed me because my maternal grandmother fixed envious eyes upon it when I was a little girl, and often expressed a wish to own it. Mr. William Talbot, with thorough appreciation of the site as one of the finest in the town, purchased it several years ago and calls it Barberry Hill, because of the prevalence of this beautiful bush in the vicinity. The shrub is rare in some parts of the United States. It was imported to this country by one Thomas Gould, son of Jeremiah Gould, who came to Newport from Dorchester, England. He planted a hedge of it about his house in Quidnessett, and the birds spread the seeds, until all Rhode Island was supplied, and Connecticut as far as the river. Soon after, some man in Plymouth, Massachusetts, imported them in the same way, and they have increased in every direction in that state. It is a beautiful shrub, with pretty yellow

blossoms that change to scarlet fruit hanging in racemes along the branches. You gather the barberries after frost in October. They make an excellent preserve, which is anti-febrile and good for colds.

I cannot understand why the bushes are by some tabooed, but I find that they are supposed to injure grain, and that, in 1766, a special act for their destruction was passed in the town of Middletown, Rhode Island. Upon application of any freeholder, the person upon whose ground they grew, was required to cut them up within one month, or in case of his neglect to do so they might be destroyed by warrant from a Justice, at the expense of the complainant. Six years later, in 1772, the Assembly extended this act over the whole Colony. I suppose the act must have been repealed, or else it has become a dead letter, for the bushes line the walls, and present their fruit in rich profusion, and have done so ever since my remembrance. We used to "put up" a bushel or more every autumn, some in sugar, and some in molasses, as the best remedy for influenza.

From Barberry Hill, The Lane, down to the

Brenton House, has become thickly lined with pleasant habitations, and the old title is no longer appropriate.

The Jeremiah Chadsey house still stands; the Spink dwelling is converted into the Elms, a fine boarding house with broad outlook upon the ball grounds, with grand stand opposite, and way across to the Block House and its Cove.

The old town house, built in 1806, is deserted for the new. A Methodist church has sprung into being where Wick's Ford and the Kill Devil once reigned. The low land has been so elevated, that even at highest tides the coves no longer meet.

On Pleasant Street, which runs north at right angles from lower Main, there was once a large square house with spacious grounds. It embraced an extensive view of the Bay, Quonsett Point, Canonicut, and other land, and was called the finest estate in the village. It was the residence of Mr. Peter Phillips, whose family came from Exeter, England. The Phillipses were among the early settlers in Narragansett, around Wickford. Our own Exeter was probably named by them, as they had estates in that town. The Hon. Peter was a

bachelor, "a gentleman of polished manners. He was very spare in person, wore a bagged wig, and always dressed with neatness. He attained to considerable eminence, having served in the State Legislature and Senate, and also as Judge in the Supreme Court of Rhode Island, and as Chief Justice in the Court of Common Pleas. All the Civil and Military appointments conferred upon him by the Legislature or the people, he discharged with ability and fidelity."

He died in his own house at an advanced age, and was buried beside his residence, in a spot previously selected by himself. This grave was on the right side, as you entered the front door, and was covered with a large oblong flat stone slab, that bore an appropriate inscription.

Despite the superstitious awe with which the village children regarded this ghostly relic, they assembled daily under the two great shady buttonwoods just outside the enclosure of the mansion, and enjoyed the strong swing that was suspended from a branch for their benefit. The house was once temporarily occupied by my grandfather, before he built on the "Ville," and under its roof my

mother was born, thus consecrating for her own offspring, the premises that would otherwise have for them less sacred associations.

Before this fact was revealed to us, we sought the buttonwoods simply for amusement. Since then we have made frequent commemorative pilgrimages, and brought away such precious trophies as old wrought nails from decaying boards, or lime-encrusted bricks and bits of stone from the ancient foundation.

It is one of the very choicest localities in the town, if we prize the stretch of water on the east, and the broad rural sweep on the west. Not far to the north is the Point Wharf, with the deep salt inlet, where the sharks used sometimes to come. A little distance to the south, at the end of Bay Street, water again, everywhere water in this bright Venice of ours.

Mr. Chapelle had the good taste to select the old Phillips site for his new residence, which dominates one of the most charming views. His house is in no wise like the former structure. The old building with all its memories, still stands in my

vivid imagination, and must defy all the attempted ravages of time.

The monumental slab, that used to beget in us so much awe, has been removed to the new cemetery outside the village, and there is nothing left on the old premises to detract from the brightness.

The Phillips farm house yet remains, next to the Belville station, about a mile southwest of our village. Mrs. Alice Morse Earle, in her valuable article in the *New England Magazine* (January, 1893), thus describes it:

“The rooms are built around a chimney twenty feet square, in whose wide fireplaces a whole ox could literally have been roasted. The great iron hooks over the fireplaces, and beside the doors, upon which the old Phillips families hung their flint locks, are still firm, and there are curious drawers in the chimney pieces for pipes and tobacco. So much room does this great chimney occupy, that there is no central staircase; only little winding stairs at the extreme corner of the house.”

On the right of the Peter Phillips home, you turn down a short street toward Fowler. It is

called Friend Street, because, in my childhood days, a Quaker Meeting House stood there. The congregation dwindled, and “the building was sold, and removed to Hamilton, where it was converted into a dwelling house.”

Opposite its western end, and fronting on Fowler Street, just north of the stepping stones that lead to the old Narragansett Church, was a tumble-down habitation, where there lived a remnant of the “Rome” slaves, a peculiar family of negroes, that interested us children to a wonderful degree.

Mr. Rome (pronounced *Room*) owned a fine estate in Boston Neck, west of Narragansett Bay. He came from England to Rhode Island in 1761 as the agent of the house of Halsey & Hopkins, and was afterward appointed the agent of the British creditors generally. He lived in Newport, winters, and in the summer occupied his country mansion, which he called Bachelor’s Hall. It was highly finished and furnished. The beds were concealed from view in the wainscots. When the hour for retiring arrived, a servant would touch a spring in the ceiling and the bed would protrude

itself, as if by magic, prepared for the reception of its tenant. Mr. Rome occasionally gave large parties at his “little country villa,” entertaining his friends with sumptuous hospitality.

Unfortunately, in the contest between England and her colonies, he espoused the cause of Great Britain, and became obnoxious to the General Assembly of Rhode Island, which caused his arrest on charge of “corruption, and partiality against the Legislature, and the Courts and Juries of the Colony—with the advice (in a letter sent to a friend in Boston, and thence to London) to annul the charter and create a government more dependent on the Crown.” He was brought before the Bar, where he made such evasive and contemptuous answers that he was put in the common jail, and there remained until the House rose.

Soon after his release, apprehending danger, he fled on board the Man-of-war *Rose*, then lying in the Narragansett Bay. His property was confiscated by the State, and all his effects were sold, and the money was paid into the general Treasury.

The only vestige remaining in later days, was this family from his household servants.

Old Pero, short, square, grizzly haired, and thoroughly African in features, used to take our Tom's place at my grandfather's stable in the summer, and do such chores as needed his care around the house and grounds. His wife was a large dowager-looking woman, but always ill from *taenia*. She kept stately seclusion in the west chamber, admitting only such friends as she desired to see. Hers was the only room in the rickety house that was really habitable, and it was at the risk of one's life to surmount the gaping stairs and get over the loose boards of the ante-chamber to the grand presence. But we were strongly attracted and dared every obstacle in order to penetrate to this wonderful museum.

The place was to us full of mysteries. There were two deaf mute daughters and one deaf and dumb son, and a little grandchild, three years old, who could not stand upright, but hopped about like a toad. Near by was a frog pond, that was by some thought to have a pre-natal influence in the case, but the doctor laughed at the old wives' theories, which were put to flight when strength came

to the posterior muscles, and the boy walked like other human beings.

His mother had twin babies, for which we made duplicate suits. The tiny beings were cunning enough, with their black woolly heads, side by side on the white pillow, and it pleased us to see them in the pretty pink frocks, and "bird's eye" bibs that our hands had fashioned.

The clumsy mother overlaid one of them one luckless night, and we lost interest when the novelty was gone, though we were not permitted to abate our charity.

CHAPTER VI.

Suburban Haunts.

AMILE or more northwest of the clustering village houses, is a large boulder, so poised upon a foundation rock, that it can, by the slightest effort, be stirred to a cradle-like motion. The rumbling reverberation is soft or loud, as we choose to make it. It is said that the Indians used this method to summon their Council, or as an important signal.

Whatever purpose it may have served to the wild men of the forest, our young people made it a happy and frequent rendezvous. From the summit we could see Newport, Bristol, and Fall River, in the sunlight, and the deep blue waters of the Narragansett Bay intervening. All around us were bayberry and sweet fern, and low black

huckleberry and trailing blackberry vines, and fragrant wild flowers. Locust trees edged the stone walls, and swung their sweet incense to the breeze. Clematis crept along the thick bushes, and many varieties of shrub and blossom garnished the roadside all the way from the village to our favorite Hall's Rock.

Buttercups and daisies adorned our shorter route home, across the meadows, and the breath of the gentle cows, and the scent of new milk dropping from full udders, and the beautiful sunset glow as the day was drawing to its close, are among very pleasant memories. From spring to autumn, the "wayside trimmings," as our lovely friend calls the wild blossoms, kept our course triumphal with their succession of floral beauty. The bright dandelion, the violets, the "bluets" or "innocence," the tansy with military buttons, the golden rod, the sumach, rich and velvety; oh! so many treasures spread freely and lavishly all along our path through life!

From the Rolling Rock we sometimes extended our walk to the legendary spot where the Devil

planted his foot, as he stepped from Canonicut to our mainland.

There is its distinct imprint, though not the cloven formation that is generally attributed to his Satanic Majesty. It is very large, like the foot of a giant. Cerberus no doubt accompanied his master, for there are also dog's tracks in the rock. We never dreamed of disputing the truth of the tradition, and even now we retain a degree of credence in what was, in our childhood, positive faith, so that a renewed pilgrimage to that famous region is a strictly performed function whenever we are anywhere within reach of the locality.

The once charming and hospitable mansion a little to the south of the Devil's Foot, was our constant attraction and frequent rest after our long tramp. There in our young days, dwelt some delightful literary old friends. The site was originally where Haven's Tavern stood on the high road, a resort for travelers.

Then the wheel of fortune brought a more gentle and gratuitous hospitality. Now the place is wholly changed. Strangers occupy the premises. The beautiful north garden plot has run to grass.

The moss roses that once peeped through the picket fence no longer greet us as we pass; the wealth of cultivated flowers is gone.

But for immortal happy memories, it would be sad to traverse the old paths again.

Coming back toward the village, not far from the Block House, on the opposite side, a few rods up Stony Lane, is a farm house, that once was white and thrifty in all its environments, and still bears a comfortable aspect.

There lived Mr. Benjamin Smith, with his genial wife and their son and daughter, and a troop of merry grandchildren.

Can we ever forget the sweet cordiality with which we were entertained, as, with empty tin pails, *en route* for berries, we unceremoniously besieged this delightful abode?

The dear old lady never failed in her genuine welcome, and the children were eager to join us in our raid upon the bushes not far away; and when we were tired, after filling our pails, there was a feast of huckleberries and sweet new milk at the big table under the farm roof, and light rolls from

the bake kettle, and “hearts” and “rounds” that were the rule for company in those days.

I recall the cool, large room, with the mistress at her flax wheel, and the humming sound that was music to my ear.

The place seemed so removed from the outer world. The atmosphere was calm and peaceful. There was no seeking after fame or notoriety. The worthy people lived what some would call their uneventful life, free from ostentation or display. Still, they wrought well their appointed tasks, and made their indelible impression ; and, though sleeping in their lowly graves on the old farm, they live in our grateful hearts.

Southeast of the village lies Homogansett, the location of one of the summer residences of the Narragansett chieftains, and the place of their annual festivities. Within this Indian area is Duck Cove, once in possession of a practical farmer who utilized the acres for the production of such crops as would prove the most remunerative.

Then it passed into the hands of a dear, silver-headed old gentleman, with a family whose aesthetic taste transformed it into a most charming

abode with just enough of artificial culture and adornment to make more prominent the natural grace. The original dwelling, with slight additions, stands where it always did, and is a pleasant feature in the landscape. From the front piazza one looks over a rocky, grassy slope, through forest trees to the sparkling water, and all around is rural and delightful.

A fine mansion has been built near by, by Mr. Randall Greene, son-in-law of Judge Pitman; and just beyond, in full view of the Bay, is the residence of Mrs. Earle, one of whose sons married the Alice Morse whom I have quoted, the author of several interesting books on New England, and of other worthy literature. Mr. Dyer, son-in-law of Mrs. Randall Greene, has the ancient cottage and some of the Duck Cove land, where he has constructed the Homogansett green-houses that perfume the air with their blossoms.

From the windows of Mrs. Greene's fine house there are varied views. Here are green lawns, thrifty vines, stalwart trees, and blooming shrubs. There, are glimpses of rippling water, or cool, dark pools, with the shadow of waving branches, and

now and then glints of sunlight through the fluttering leaves. Then there is a sight of the village, and the Bay, and the charming coves making up in all directions. It is very delightful in this suburban retreat.

I spent a happy day there recently, and strolled with my friend across a rustic bridge that led to a point of land beyond the Cove, where the wild ducks like to brood. The sandy beach on that neck affords excellent bathing facilities, and the green knoll above the shore, is refreshing with aromatic shrubs and the sweet wild rose. We sat a long time in a sheltered spot in the quiet of that delicious June afternoon, talking and dreaming the precious hours away.

Could it be that the braves, Canonicus, and Miantonomi, and Canonchet, had frequented these very haunts, and danced their war dances, and smoked the pipe of peace, and glided over the beautiful Bay in their birch canoes, and roamed the thick woods in the neighborhood, and here signed the treaties with the white settlers?

Almost I expected to see the red men leap out from the thick bushes and avenge themselves for

our intrusion; but none came to disturb our perfect calm.

Many were sleeping calmly in their burial ground not far from the farm house, on the other side of the bridge; and we went there to muse amid the rough head and foot stones that mark the graves.

My friend told me that one of her brothers, and my Uncle Doctor, and a certain Dominie, once exhumed from this ground the skeleton of an Indian of unusual height, and from the care with which he had been embalmed in Indian fashion, they considered him a man of consequence in his tribe, perhaps one of their chiefs.

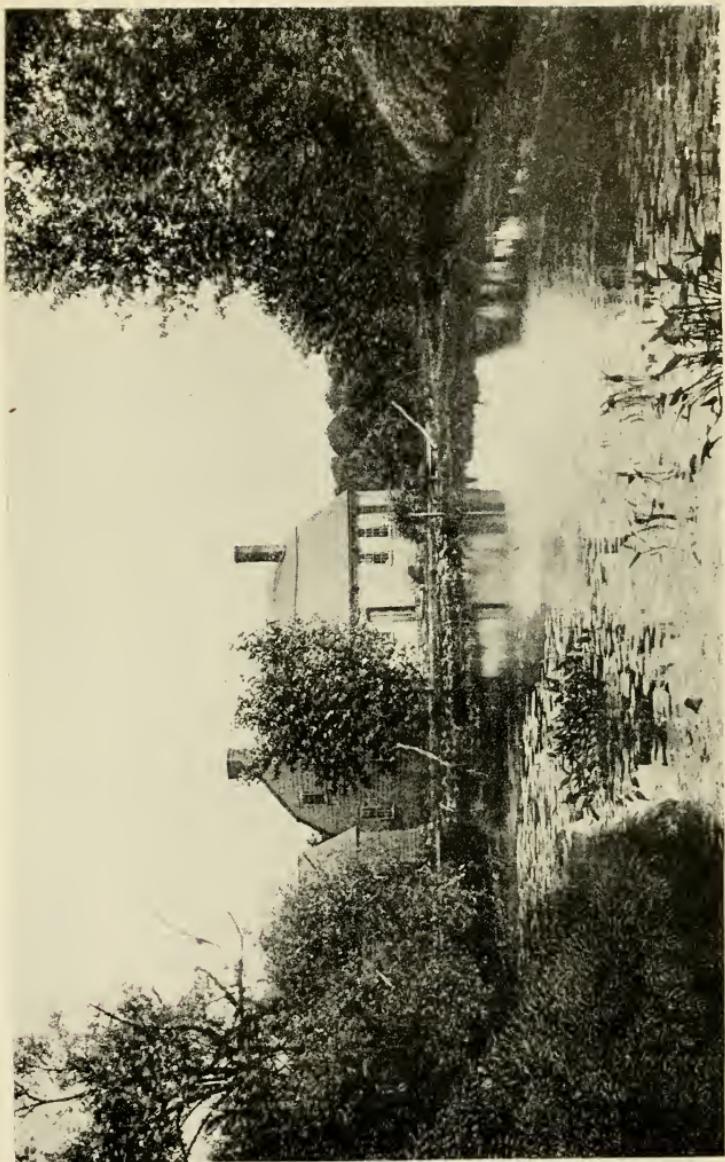
The skull was given to the Dominie, to take with him to his distant home. This, with other relics, was left over night with his luggage, standing unguarded upon the depot platform. Thieves opened one of the packages, in hope of booty, when they were glared at by the ghastly Indian trophy, and were so terrified that they dropped the skull, and fled without gain.

I saw at Duck Cove some of the eggs of a big turtle that had come from its watery haunts to

make its nest in the hot, dry sand that would hatch for it its numerous progeny. There were twelve pretty white globes already laid; they were about an inch and a half in diameter. If the creature had accomplished only this small proportion of the three hundred to be deposited, it had yet quite a task before it. As it is said to take three occasions, at three weeks' intervals, laying one hundred eggs at each time, the presumption is that it had been suddenly disturbed.

This was a large, fierce specimen, and had been previously captured, for there was upon its back a name and date. It snapped furiously at a stick, and though tied by strong cords, made its escape.

BIRTHPLACE OF GILBERT STUART. (pp. 110-111.)



CHAPTER VII.

The Gilbert Stuart Place.

THIS noted locality is about four miles to the southwest of the village. There still remains an unpretentious house, that was the birthplace of the celebrated artist. It is said that between the years 1746 and 1750, one Dr. Thomas Moffat, a Scotch physician of the Boerhaaven school, emigrated from Great Britain, and settled in the "Garden of America," as Rhode Island is called by the historian, Collander. Not being able to succeed in his profession, he conceived the idea of cultivating tobacco and making snuff, to supply the great quantity that was imported every year from Glasgow. As there was no man in this country skilled in the manufacture, he sent to Scotland and obtained a competent millwright, by the name of Gil-

bert Stuart. Selecting for his mill a proper stream in Narragansett, the first snuff manufactory in New England was there erected. The Scotch citizen so prospered, that he soon married a very handsome woman, the daughter of Captain John Anthony, a Welshman, who owned a farm on Rhode Island near Newport, which he sold to Dean Berkeley.

The Narragansett Church record makes this entry:

“April eleventh, 1756, being Palm Sunday, Doctor McSparran read, preached, and baptized a child named Gilbert Stuart, son of Gilbert Stuart the snuff grinder. Sureties, the Doctor himself, Mr. Benjamin Mumford, and Mrs. Hannah Mumford.”

This child was destined to become one of our most noted artists, whose name and fame will survive the centuries.

“Letters addressed in his after years to a friend, have the middle name Charles, but it is said that through fear of betraying his father’s Jacobite principles, he dropped this part of his Christian name, and never used it in the days of his notori-

ety. At thirteen years of age the precocious youth began to copy pictures, and at length attempted likenesses in black lead."

Cosmo Alexander, a Scotch artist traveling in this country, was attracted by the ambitious lad's obvious talent, and gave him some valuable instruction, afterwards taking him with him to Edinburgh. The death of this patron soon occurring, young Stuart returned to Newport, and there occupied himself with his art. Subsequently he spent some years in England, where for two years in London, he made little progress, and suffered greatly from poverty. Then he became acquainted with Benjamin West, in whose family he resided for several years, and from whom he received valuable assistance. He soon rose to eminence as a portrait painter, rivaling Reynolds and the best English artists of the day.

Subsequently he lived in Dublin and Paris, and, in 1793, returned to end his days in his native land. It is said that as a painter of heads, he holds the first place among American artists, except Copley, and that his flesh coloring was very fine. His portrait of Washington, which was his highest ambi-

tion, and which he painted in Philadelphia, has long been considered the standard likeness, and is the original of innumerable copies. The first study, together with a head of Mrs. Washington, is in possession of the Boston Athenæum.

From Stuart's daughter Anne, we have some additional interesting items concerning her noted father's career.

She says: "After he had struggled through a great deal, while in London, his pictures in the Royal Academy attracted the attention of some noblemen, and he was employed by all the most distinguished people. He then married Charlotte Coats, in the town of Reading, in the County of Berkshire, in England, after which he went to Ireland for the purpose of painting the Duke of Rutland, then Lord Lieutenant of that Kingdom. Unfortunately the duke suddenly died, and was buried on the very day of Stuart's arrival; but the artist's fame had reached Dublin, and he lived there for some time in great splendor, and was sought, and fully employed, by the nobility. After his return to America, while he was absorbed in the portrait of Washington, the Duke of Kent offered to send a

ship of war to take him to Halifax, in order to paint his portrait, which proffer he declined.

"When quite young he had accomplished a likeness of Sir Joshua Reynolds, which was considered the finest ever painted. A few years previous to his death he was asked to paint a head of himself for the Academy of Florence, Italy, the greatest compliment ever paid to an American artist; but he did not comply with the request, so little value did he set upon such honors.

"He had twelve children, some of whom inherited his genius."

The house in which he was born is still standing. It has been somewhat transformed, though the bedroom where he first saw the light is left unchanged. On the south side, the building has two stories, and on the north, one story, the north sill resting on the mill dam. The lower story was used as the snuff mill. The snuff mill has gone down and a grist mill has taken its place. The house is situated at the head of Petaquamscott, or Narrow River, about fifty rods above where the river empties into the pond.

The location is picturesque and delightful, but

very secluded. The old place is an object of curiosity and interest to tourists, and parties from Narragansett Pier, and all the adjacent summer resorts, make excursions to the “old snuff mill,” and row on the pleasant river.

An enterprising individual recently purchased the premises, and dividing the attic into several rooms, and making some modern improvements on the main floor, intended to convert the house into a profitable boarding house, or a wayside café. During the progress of alterations, however, he had a quarrel with one of the workmen, whom he shot and killed; thus ending his own proposed career, and securing for himself a prison, if not the death penalty.

It is but lately that I stepped over the threshold of the simple room where Gilbert Stuart was born. The heavy old wooden door was still hanging upon its original hinges, and a sort of sacredness possessed the little place where the famous son of the snuff grinder drew his first breath. Outside the house, a wooden platform was built over the mill dam, to the very trunk of the ancient willow on the bank of the stream. I stood and listened to the

musical flow of the water, and dreamed of the promising little artist playing under the graceful tree, or busy in his crude efforts to improve the genius that would have expression.

About two years before his death, Gilbert Stuart visited the home of his nativity, and spoke of the old willow as "quite small" when he was a boy, and of the northeast bedroom on the ground floor, as the place in which his mother told him he was born.

"Miss Jane Stuart, the youngest daughter of the artist, was a portrait and landscape painter of deserved celebrity. Her copies of her father's Washington are executed with truthful fidelity. The originals were taken by him at the request of the Legislature of Rhode Island, and conspicuously placed in the Senate Chamber of the State House at Newport."

As everything relating to the family of a noted individual is of interest to later generations, it may not be amiss to record that in the beginning of the Revolutionary struggle, Stuart's father emigrated from Newport, Rhode Island, to Newport, Nova Scotia, leaving his family to follow him at their convenience.

Mrs. Stuart preferred a petition to the General Assembly, for liberty to join her husband, stating that he was possessed of a tract of land in the township of Newport, Nova Scotia, under improvement, and that as he could not maintain his family in the Colony, and purposed to remain on his Nova Scotia farm, her wish and her duty was to go to him. She expressed herself as “willing to give the amplest security that nothing but the wearing apparel and household furniture of the family, and necessary provision for the voyage, should be carried with her and her family.”

The Assembly voted “that the prayer of this petitioner be granted, and that the sloop *Ross* be permitted to sail under the inspection of Messrs. John Collins and David Seers of Newport in this Colony, or either of them.”

Here we lose sight of the old people.

The artist’s son, Charles, who died at the age of twenty-six, was a landscape painter of promise.

Gilbert Charles Stuart died in Boston, July, 1828, aged seventy-two.

The tragedy that shocked the whole neighborhood of the Stuart house, has cast a pall that cannot

easily be removed. On my last recent visit I was impressed as by a ghostly presence. The mill pond was quiet; the wheels were still. The old willow drooped over the water in silent reflection. The only signs of life were two little children, some dogs, and a brood of chickens scratching in the gravel before the house door. Some flat bottomed boats were moored to the little bridge that spanned the pond. It might have been made such a pleasant retreat. By its rural environments it is well fitted to attract the lovers of nature.

It is a sad pity that the ungoverned passions of men can so change what should be the scene of joy and peace!

CHAPTER VIII.

The Old Church.

SITUATED on a green and retired spot at the end of a lane that is fast becoming an inhabited street of our Venice, standing solitary and comparatively useless, is a rustic and venerable building that bears, both within and without, the evident marks of old age. Nearly two hundred years ago it was built upon another foundation, about five miles from its present site, the land being given by Lodowick Updyke, who was born in 1646. Driving from Wickford to the southwest, through Allenton, along the Ridge Hill road, we pass Pentazekias Corner, and soon come to a spot that now seems desolate indeed. The present isolation from all signs of human habitation might well lead us to wonder at the choice of this locality for a

place of Divine worship, but for our knowledge of the condition of things in this part of Narragansett in the early colonial times. There were then scattered over South Kingstown and Boston Neck, and the region round about, large landed proprietors, with their fine houses, and many slaves and dependents; and a church in this spot was equidistant from most of the congregation. Prior to its erection, the English Churchmen settled in this part of the country, worshipped in private houses. Earnestly desiring positive and stated priestly offices, and a holy temple for the worship of Almighty God, they applied to the Bishop of London for a clergyman.

The Rev. Christopher Bridge was transferred from King's Chapel, Boston, then an Episcopal church, and became, in 1706, the regular incumbent of St. Paul's, Narragansett. It is said to have been under his rectorship that the church was built in 1707, by the voluntary contributions of the people. The records of the time speak of it as "a timber building, commodiously situated for those who generally attend divine service. It is distant from Providence, the nearest church, twenty-seven

miles.” It was a plain, oblong structure, with curved ceiling; many windows, some of them arched, and all with innumerable small panes of glass. A wide gallery was added, in 1723, on the front and two sides, with six round, substantial pillars upholding it. There was an old-fashioned wine-glass pulpit, with reading desk below. The chancel and altar were in the east, apart from the place of Common Prayer and preaching. Square box pews surrounded the sides, and were in the center. A broad double door of entrance was in front, and a smaller one on the west. There was originally no tower nor spire. Access to the galleries was by stairs leading from the main floor.

To the people of the present day, the obstacles to worship in that church of nearly two centuries ago, would seem insurmountable. Far removed from the residences; no communication except by “drift-ways” or cattle paths, through the different plantations; no luxurious carriages; only the horseback rides to and fro, whatever the state of the weather; nothing but heated soapstones, or little tin foot-stoves, with live coals, to make the frigid temperature in winter endurable. Who among us would

often brave such discomforts in order to reach the House of God?

Despite these drawbacks, we may be certain that in those times of sterling faith and unwavering principle, the sacred duty of Sunday observance was strictly performed, and that absence from any religious service was rather the exception than the rule.

I can imagine its being very delightful on a bright summer day, to mount a fine steed, and on a pillion behind an “old school” gentleman, with an attendant servant to open the gates or let down the bars, traverse the rich domains of old Narragansett. Updyke’s and Channing’s pictures of that age and country, with the courtly manners, the rich costumes, and superior culture, and broad hospitality, are most enticing and attractive.

Perhaps distance lends enchantment. But there can be no glamour over that old time getting to church, amid sleet and snow, and the pinching ordeal as the congregation sat to hear the long sermon, while the mercury was many degrees below zero.

The Rev. Mr. Bridge, the first regular rector of

St. Paul's, is spoken of as "a religious and worthy man, a very good scholar, and a fine, grave preacher. His *performances* in the pulpit were solid, judicious, and profitable. His conversation was agreeable and improving. Though a strict Churchman in his principles, yet he was of great respect and charity to dissenters, and much esteemed by them. He was bred at the University of Cambridge, England."

He did not remain long in Narragansett, but removed to Rye, New York, where he died in 1719.

In 1717, the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts sent the Rev. William Guy as missionary over the Narragansett parish. He had been laboring in Charleston, South Carolina, and at St. Helen's, Port Royal, "the whole nation of the Yammosée Indians being included in his cure."

After the desolation of his parish by the Indian war of 1715, he was sent to Narragansett at a salary of seventy pounds.

"He entered upon his new mission with much zeal. The members of the Church of England received him with tokens of joy. They presently pro-

vided him with a convenient house, and because it was at some distance from the church, they presented him with a horse, and in many ways showed marks of their favor. He was well respected by the people, and several who lived regardless of all religions before he came, began to be constant attendants at Divine Worship."

In 1719 he returned to St. Andrew's Church, Charleston, where he died in 1751, after an excellent work among his people.

In April, 1721, the Rev. James McSparran arrived from England, and took charge of St. Paul's, Narragansett, which had for several years been dependent upon the occasional ministrations of the Rev. Mr. Honeyman, rector of Trinity Church, Newport.

As Updyke's *Narragansett Church* gives no account of Mr. McSparran's antecedents on this side of the Atlantic, I copy what I have gathered from Munroe's *History of Bristol*, and also from the researches of the late Mr. George Jones of Philadelphia, who had personal access to reliable records in the First Congregational Church in Bristol, Rhode Island.

"In 1718, a young man of Scotch-Irish parentage, and bearing credentials of a Licentiate of the Presbytery of Scotland, and who had but lately landed in Boston, came to visit a relative in Bristol. The pulpit of the First Church at that time being vacant, he was requested to preach, which he did the next Sunday. His wonderful oratory made such an impression upon his hearers that he was invited by a vote of 73 out of 76 to become their pastor. He accepted, and one hundred pounds were voted for his salary, and the same amount toward the expenses of his settlement.

"For a short time all went well, but after awhile some reports began to be spread about, derogatory to his character and conduct. An angry partisanship arose, some believing the stories, and others having implicit faith in their pastor."

"No records of the charges against Mr. McSparran have been preserved," says one writer.

"Nothing but 'unguarded conversation' was ever charged against his life in this town," adds another.

"Committees were raised, the rumors thoroughly investigated, and the result was favorable to Mr. McSparran. He continued to preach with

eloquence and great power, and his Christian life and deportment were satisfactory.

“Then his credentials, as a Licentiate, were questioned. He proposed to return to the old country and obtain undoubted ratification of his papers and license. The town voted and resolved, ‘that leave be given to Mr. McSparran, our Minister, to take a voyage to England or Ireland, in order to procure a confirmation of his credentials, the truth of which being by some questioned, and that he return to us again some time in June next ensuing, and proceed in ye work of ye ministry, if he procure ye confirmation of ye aforesaid credentials.’ He sailed; the date of his embarkation is not given.

“On the 20th of June the town had heard nothing of the absentee, and voted to await his return until the following September.”

The Manual of the First Church says, “This period also passed without his return, or any report from him, and the town was then ready to coöperate with the Church in securing another pastor.”

Mr. Munroe continues: “But Mr. McSparran never came back to the Congregational Church.

Either upon the long voyage, or while he was in England, a change came over his ecclesiastical views. Perhaps the treatment he had received at the hands of the Massachusetts ministers, may have led him to question the truth of the religious dogmas held by them."

On the 21st of August, 1720, he was admitted to deacon's orders in the Church of England, by the Bishop of London. On the 25th of September, he was ordained to the priesthood by the Archbishop of Canterbury, and on October 23rd, was commissioned a Missionary to the Province of New England. He shortly after re-crossed the Atlantic as the Missionary of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts, to Narragansett, in New England, "who is to officiate in Bristol, Freetown, Swanzy, and Little Compton, where there are many people, members of the Church of England, destitute of a minister."

Munroe says: "The result of this action of Mr. McSparran was the formation in Bristol, of St. Michael's Church. People who had clung to him closely in his time of trial were naturally influenced. The establishment of St. Michael's

by his instrumentality made his opponents still more bitter, and the peculiar circumstances made the relations between the Congregationalists and the Episcopalians more unpleasant."

Mr. Burt says of Nathaniel Cotton, the third pastor of the Congregational Church, "he went through a world of trouble with the Church party."

The town records contain many protests from the Church of England against what were termed "the unjust and intolerant actions of the Congregationalists."

To one conversant with the religious history of the Colonial period, it cannot seem singular that Mr. McSparran had sufficiently experienced the strict and unreasonable notions of the Puritans of that time, and that he was led by their exactions and intolerance, to such reflection and study as made his transfer to the "Catholic and Apostolic Church" a matter of principle as well as choice.

His *America Dissected* abounds in expressions that prove his acquaintance with the religious confusion of the various sects, to have been the school to bring him to a settled Faith.

Speaking of the "Brownists," he says of their

organization and leader: “A young clergyman of fire and zeal over-proportionate to his discretion, drew the first dissenting disciple after him, who, though he boasted he had been in every prison in England for conscience’ sake, yet when he cooled and came into the Church again, by a recantation, he found it easier to mislead, than to induce his followers to find the right road again.”

He also quotes from Hutchinson: “By a letter dated from on board ship *Arabella*, in Plymouth Harbor in England, begging the prayers and the blessings of the Bishop and clergy of England, these Massachusetts Puritans disclaim any design of separating from the Church of England, avowing their intention to be only a secession in point of place, but no departure from doctrines or worship. Notwithstanding that pretence, they were no sooner settled in their new habitations than their old unopened purposes appeared. The Common Prayer was outvoted, and extempore prayer, then called the new way, was preferred to the old Liturgic method of worship. From this time they who clamored so loud against persecution, and the measures taken in England to exact uniformity,

immediately made a law that none should be free of their jurisdiction, or capable of the privileges of their New Colony, but such as were members, that is in their sense, actual communicants in their new modeled churches. Many Churchmen and some Anabaptists who accompanied them in their embarkation, expecting to meet with no molestation on account of their principles and way of worship, expressed their dissatisfaction, and refused submission to their law. Whereupon they were first disfranchised, and an actual sentence of banishment pronounced against them unless they submitted by a short and certain day."

Whatever may have caused Dr. McSparran to leave the ranks of the Dissenters, and attach himself to the old Historic Church, he clung from this time forward with zealous tenacity to her doctrine and fellowship, and strove to win others to a similar devotion. Soon after his settlement in St. Paul's he was united in wedlock to Hannah, daughter of William Gardiner of Boston Neck, Narragansett.

In the Blessed Virgin month, while the fresh spring fragrance of apple blossoms and violets

made delicious the air, the good Doctor led his American bride to the altar, where the Rev. Mr. Honeyman made of the twain one flesh.

Mrs. McSparran's portrait presents a beautiful and attractive woman, with large, dark, expressive eyes, wavy hair, a plump face, and a graceful figure.

Long previous to Dr. McSparran's coming to dwell in the Narragansett country, the Chief Sachems, in 1657, had sold to seven purchasers, for sixteen pounds, a large tract of land, fifteen miles long and six or seven broad. In 1668, a majority of these purchasers set apart three hundred acres of the best of this possession to be forever and as an encouragement, the income and improvement thereof wholly for an "orthodox person" that shall be obtained to preach God's word to the inhabitants.

Potter says, in his history of Narragansett, "It would seem that no deed or more formal conveyance was ever made. It was surveyed and platted and the words 'to the Ministry' entered in the draft."

From the names of the purchasers one might

judge the gift as designed for the support of the Church of England, in the Narragansett country, but in this new land the term “Orthodox” was capable of a broad interpretation, and after long years of dispute between Episcopalians and Presbyterians, over the legacy, singular to say, it was by British Judgment given to the Congregational Church at Kingstown, Rhode Island.

The Rev. Dr. McSparran, desiring a settled residence, with an eye to the remarkable beauty of a most charming locality, purchased land and built a house at the foot of a high hill, that has ever since been called by his name.

Whoever stands near the old “Glebe,” and casts his glance on all sides, must be delighted with the variety and grandeur.

On the west rises a double range of hills, running for some distance north and south, and presenting a rugged yet pleasant aspect. The eastern view embraces broad meadows, leading down to the Petaquamscutt River, which has its source somewhere near the Gilbert Stuart place in North Kingstown, and pursues its way south for miles, emptying finally into the Atlantic Ocean.

It is a brackish stream, subject in its lower course to the salt tides that give volume and picturesqueness. In some of its southern variations it is broad and deep, but in the more northern localities it deserves the name Narrow River. Trees and shrubs skirt its banks in many places, making it sylvan and beautiful.

Beyond it, on the west, lies Boston Neck, with its rich and fertile tract, shining green between the river and Narragansett Bay, over the blue waters of which is Canonicut, and beyond this the Harbor of Newport, and the city looming up, with its roofs, and spires, and shipping, in perfect clearness. Away to the southeast, the grand Atlantic swells and foams in the far distance, yet is distinctly visible from the upper rooms of the Glebe, and from the summit of the hills.

In this choice spot, where Dr. McSparran fixed his habitation, there was rare enjoyment, not only of a superb nature, but also of the many congenial neighbors and the gifted friends who came from Newport and Boston, and even from Virginia, to share the free hospitality of the Colonial families of Narragansett.

The Honorable Wilkins Updyke has left such vivid descriptions of the manners and customs of that time, and that locality, that all subsequent records are but quotations from his graphic pen.

Still it is not amiss to avail one's self of his research, and thus give interest to this book.

The extent of individual possessions before the American Revolution, was so entirely different from the farmers' ownership of the present day, that it seems to us fabulous. Plantations five, six, and ten miles square; thirty, forty or fifty cows; as many as a hundred horses; from four or five hundred to a thousand sheep; twenty or thirty or fifty slaves; these would constitute a marvelous estate in this our age. But the Hazards and Robinsons, and Gardiners, and Stantons, and others of like celebrity, improved thousands of acres, and exported rich produce from herd and field and dairy, lading vessels with horses, and calves, and fatted bullocks, and grain, and butter and cheese.

Besides this export from the home yield, much wool and flax were manufactured for the large households, which sometimes numbered seventy or more in parlor and kitchen.

The intellectual status of the society of Narragansett was superior. The Browns, and Potters, and Brentons, and Updykes, and Babeocks, with their peers, owned large and valuable libraries and fine paintings. The Rev. Dr. McSparran possessed many rare classical volumes, and was highly educated, and graduated in the University of Glasgow, and received worthy testimonials of character and learning, from William, Archbishop of Canterbury, and from John of London, in his letter missive.

“Into his family he took young gentleman students, as was the usage of the times among clergymen. Thomas Clapp, the efficient President of Yale College, completed his education under him.”

The Doctor must have been a man of Herculean strength of mind and body, to accomplish all that was demanded of him in his social, sacred, and other duties. His parish seemed to have no bounds, for we read of ministerial functions exercised in Warwick, and Coeset, which was a part of Warwick, in Freetown, Swanzy, Little Compton, Canonicut, and wherever opportunity called, “in several corners of Narragansett.”

Of himself he writes in his *America Dissected*:

“By my exertions and out labors, is built twenty-five miles to the westward of me, Westerly Church, but not now under my care. Another sixteen miles to the northward of me, where I officiate once a month, the Warwick Church; and at a place six miles farther off, on the Saturday before that monthly Sunday, I gathered a congregation at a place called New Bristol, where now officiates a missionary from the Society, and I was the first Episcopal minister that ever preached at Providence, where for a long time I used to go four times a year. That Church has now a fixed missionary of its own. I took notice before of my labors at New London in Connecticut, and would to God I could boast of more success! But toil and travel have put me beyond my best, and if I am not rewarded with a little rest in Europe, where my desires are, I have strong hopes of infinitely desirable rest from my labors, in those celestial mansions prepared by my dear Redeemer.”

The Westerly Church spoken of in this letter, was built on a lot of land given for that purpose by George Ninigret, Chief Sachem of the Narragan-

sett Indians. It joined the Champlin farm, and when the church went down, was held by them in possession.

It was on the Charlestown side when the town of Westerly was divided, and must not be confused with the present church in Westerly.

Dr. McSparran wrote, in 1752, of his clerical efforts, when he had been for thirty years in Narragansett.

He was a staunch Churchman and earnestly desired the unity of all Christian bodies. His dictum was, "But for the prejudice of education, the separation our fathers made had been long ere now healed up by their sons."

His family ties were exceedingly tender and affectionate. These were destined to be suddenly broken.

In London, where he was on a visit with his wife, on the twenty-fourth of June, 1755, Mrs. McSparran died of small pox, and was interred on the twenty-fifth in the Broadway Chapel burying ground.

The Church record says: "Wm. Graves preached the funeral sermon and buried her.



MRS. HANNAH McSPARRAN.

(pp. 138-139.)

Brigadier General Samuel Waldo, Christopher Hilly, Esq., Mr. Jonathan Barnard, all three New England men; and George Watmough, an Englishman, were her pall-bearers. Dr. McSparran and Dr. Gardiner's son John, were the mourners. The corpse was carried in a hearse drawn by six horses, and there were two mourning coaches, one for the bearers, the other for the mourners. She was the most pious of women, and died, as she deserved to be, much lamented."

I copy from a letter of Mr. Daniel Berkeley Updike to the Rhode Island Historical Society, the following interesting account concerning Mrs. McSparran's burial place:

"When in London in the summer of 1886, I determined to find her grave if possible. It will be noticed that the entry in the records of St. Paul's, states that Mrs. McSparran was buried in Broadway Chapel Burying Yard, in Westminster. I was unable to find any church of that name in the district of Westminster, but, after some uncertain search, in the neighborhood in which I was told Broadway was, I noticed a street named Great Chapel Street. Thinking this name might prove

a clue, I followed the street until I came to a modern Gothic church of considerable size, on the corner of Great Chapel Street and Little Chapel Street, the grave yard being bounded on the south by the well-known thoroughfare of Victoria Street, that portion of which, I subsequently found, was formerly called The Broadway.

“Calling on the Vicar, the Rev. F. K. Aglionby, I ascertained that it occupied the site of a church formerly known as the New Chapel in Tothill Fields, the Broadway Westminster, founded in 1631 as a chapel of ease to St. Margaret’s, Westminster, in which parish it was, by Dr. Durrell, Prebendary of Westminster.

“The bequest of the founder proving insufficient to complete the chapel, a public subscription was opened, to which Archbishop Laud contributed one thousand pounds. The ground around the chapel was consecrated as an additional burial ground for the mother parish, and all rights of registration and fees were reserved to the incumbent of St. Margaret’s.

“The chapel, before it acquired the status of a District Church, was served by a chaplain elected

by the vestry. The most eminent of the chaplains were Dr. George Smallridge, Bishop of Bristol, and William Romaine, author of *The Life of Faith*, and *The Walk of Faith*.

“The present church is within the parish of St. Margaret, and is distant from the mother church, and from Westminster Abbey, about a quarter of a mile.

“Mr. Aglionby kindly gave me permission to inspect the grave yard (which is not accessible to the public), as well as to see the interior of the church itself, after the weekly services, as the aisles contain many memorial stones.

“Accordingly I spent, later, some time in examining the stones in the church yard (now disused but exceedingly well cared for) before proceeding to the church.

“After a short search I was rewarded by finding a flat stone, a parallelogram in shape, with the following inscription, which I give precisely as it now stands:

“ ‘Here lies
Hannah McSparran
Wife of the Rev.
Dr. McSparran
of New England.
Who died June () 4th, 17()
in the () year of her A().’ ”

“The stone is exceedingly defaced by wind and weather.

“As one enters the path of approach to the church, from Victoria Street, it lies on the left hand side, about fifty paces along the path from the street, and perhaps six feet on the left of the path itself.

“A map on a large scale, which includes Christ Church and its immediate neighborhood, gives almost exactly the position of this grave. A copy of this map is in possession of the Rhode Island Historical Society.

“I am happy to say that during a few days’ stay in London in November, 1887, I again saw the Vicar, who kindly gave me permission to have the inscription on this stone re-cut, and rehabilitated as far as is possible. This I hope to do, and thus preserve a few years longer the memorial of the resting place of a kinswoman and a daughter of Narragansett.

“Boston, April 30th, 1889.”

It was a bitter home-coming of the good old Doctor, after laying his wife in her lowly bed in the far-off land. We may well believe that the

Glebe house was a lonesome dwelling without the gentle presence that had for so many years blessed it.

Sorrowful, and bowed down by his great loss, the Rector of St. Paul's became seriously affected in his health, yet faithfully pursued his clerical duties. It was while ministering during the winter, to the people of Providence and Warwick, that he took a severe cold which proved fatal. He died of quinsy, in his house in South Kingstown, December 1st, 1757, and was buried under the Communion Table of St. Paul's, Narragansett, on the 6th of December.

"The Rev. Mr. Usher, of Bristol, read the service, and the Rev. Mr. Pollen, of Newport, preached the funeral sermon. The pall-bearers were the Rev. Messrs. Pollen and Leaming of Newport; Rev. Matthew Graves of New London; Rev. Mr. Leaming of Providence; and Messrs. Ebenezer Brenton and John Case, Church Wardens. There were rings with mourning words, and gloves, given to the pall-bearers."

Dr. McSparran died in his chair. A description of this relic may be of interest:

"After the Rev. Doctor's death, his goods were sold at vendue. The chair that he died in was bid off by ('Wickman') John Hazard. It was very handsome, and was placed by Mr. Hazard in his best room. A feeling of superstition sent the chair to the garret. When Mr. Hazard removed to Westerly, the chair was left in the old house and somebody appropriated it. It had a very high back with top rolled over and ornamented, arms also ornamented. Seat rolled under in front, fore-legs in imitation of lion's paws; natural, dark hard-wood; no leather or other covering."

If it could be found, it would be well to secure it for the Providence or Newport Historical Society.

Mr. Wilkins Updike, in a Memorandum entitled *Reminiscences*, speaks of an accident that was supposed to hasten Dr. McSparran's death. It seems that on his way home from some ministerial function, he stopped for the night at the "Updike Mansion," or old Block House. "At family prayers, when about to kneel down, he rested one hand for support on a mahogany table, which gave way and he fell, hitting his head and

causing the blood to flow. He proceeded in his devotions, and then suffered the wound to be cared for, and the next day went home, where he was taken ill, and only lived for a few days."

There is, however, no doubt that the virulent throat trouble was the immediate cause of his death.

The Dominie was wont, on long journeys about the country, to carry with him the conveniences for making a good cup of coffee, of which he was very fond, and which refreshment was needful for him after great fatigue.

Mr. Daniel Berkeley Updike says "his odd little inlaid coffee-mill still remains in our family."

I found somewhere this description: "It is about six inches in height and is in the form of a hollow cylinder of brass, standing on a box containing a drawer, into which the coffee falls after being ground. The top of the cylinder is fitted with a crank turning at right angles to it, and attached to a corrugated shaft, between which and the cylinder the berry is crushed. The wood-work of the mill is black walnut."

In his will Dr. McSparran "devised his farm

for the use and support of a Rt. Rev. Diocesan, if one should be sent over to America, whose jurisdiction should include the Narragansett country, provided he came within the term of seven years after Mrs. McSparran's death. Otherwise the estate to be divided between his nephew, James McSparran, and Mrs. McSparran's brother, Dr. Sylvester Gardiner, of Boston."

No Bishop appearing within the specified time, the other devisees obtained the legacy, which they subsequently sold to the parish of St. Paul's "for a Glebe, for the perpetual benefit of St. Paul's Church forever; Dr. Gardiner generously donating one hundred dollars from his share. Messrs. Willets, Case, and Brown, of the Parish, are also said to have given as much as two hundred and fifty dollars each, toward the purchase."

Dr. McSparran had, in his will, given "a convenient spot of ground on the northwest corner of his land, for a church and a burial place, if need should hereafter require," but the necessity never occurring, the provision was not accepted.

What became of his books and manuscripts I do not know, excepting that a diary has recently



REV. JACOBUS McSPARRAN,
(pp. 146-147.)

come to light, and has been promised to the world, by the Providence Historical Society, which has it in custody.

This Diary has lately been published (1900).

His *America Dissected* was printed in Dublin, before his last visit to his native land. It is a graphic account of the American Colonies at the time of his residence in the Narragansett country, and is of value as a rare and correct description. I have never seen it elsewhere than as an Appendix to the *History of the Narragansett Church*, which is a subscription book, and has long been out of print.

A portrait of Dr. McSparran by Smibert represents him as a full-faced, full-bodied, genial man, with clear, earnest eyes, and mouth expressive of great sweetness. His broad, high forehead beams out from under a curled wig. He wears the black scholastic gown, white neckerchief, and sheer linen-cambric bands, and his whole appearance indicates a cheerful, happy nature.

From a time-worn parchment-covered "Record Book" belonging to St. Paul's, Narragansett, 1720,

I copy some quaint entries during the ministry of this incumbent.

“May 29, 1723. Agreed with Thomas Peckham, Sr., to lathe and plaster the church, and sd. Peckham is to have six £3 and 4d. for overhead and rainging, finding sd. Peckham materials in place, and sd. Peckham finding himself, and victuals, drink, washing and lodging, and sd. employers to find laborers to make mortar, and find sd. Peckham.

“And further, sd. Peckham is to assist sd. laborers in their work, and ye sd. Peckham is to be allowed for it. Voted likewise that a subscription be presented to all well-disposed persons, to obtain their charitable benefaction to defray the charges that will accrue in the building of the galleries and other necessary repairs in the church.”

“On Saturday, the 15th of June, 1723, we had the melancholy news of ye death of ye Right Reverend ye Lord Bishop of London. May God Almighty direct his Majesty in the choice of his successor, yt may befriend ye cause of these American churches.”

“July ye 5th, 1723. We had ye news of the

translation of the Right Reverend Father in God,
Dr. Edmond Gibson, from the See of London, in
the room of Dr. Jno. Robinson, deceased, and a
gratulatory letter sent him by the minister and
vestry at Narragansett, August ye 5th, 1723.”

“July 31st, 1723. Dyed very suddenly, Moses
Parr, the first sexton of the Church of St. Paul’s,
and was interred August ye 5th.”

1724. “School teacher sanctioned by S. P. G.,
London, for Narragansett, at the annual stipend
from the Society, £10, and he was to teach gratis,
such and so many, and no other children, as shall
be recommended by, and have a full certificate
from ye minister, or incumbent for ye time being,
yt such child or children are proper objects of the
Society’s charity.”

“April 20, 1741. Voted that the ministerial
salary be henceforth paid by contribution, and that
the contribution be collected by the Church war-
dens, or their assistants, in the same manner it is
done at Newport Church, that is to say by carry-
ing the box from pew to pew.”

“On the 12th of July, in the church in Coeset
(alias Warwick), and on the 19th at St. Paul’s,

Narragansett, was read his Majesty's order for the form of prayer to be used, for the Royal family, viz't—so far as relates to adding the clause, 'the issue of the Prince and Princess of Wales,' by me, James McSparran."

"At the Church of St. Paul, Sunday, the 24th of November, 1751, after divine service, ye gentlemen of ye vestry of said congregation stayed, and considered the complaint of ye Reverend Dr. McSparran, Pastor of this church, setting forth that he is greatly aggrieved, and bro't under oppression by the Assessors, or Rate Makers of South Kingstown, within said Dr.'s Cure. After considering that matter in all its circumstances, they came to the following resolution, and vote:

"First they humbly apprehend that it never was the intent of ye Legislators of this Colony to consider Clergymen as taxable inhabitants, that therefore the voting said gentleman, contrary to the general custom of New England in such cases, and without any express law to the purpose, is a piece of undeserved disrespect to him, and in him to every man and member of the Church of England in this Colony. And they think it their duty

to abet his cause, as far as in justice they may, and aid him in obtaining that exemption from taxes, servile, civil, and other duties which they consider him entitled to, in virtue of his high and holy office; But—

“Secondly, as they profess themselves disciples of Christ, the Prince of Peace, and would desire an amicable end to be put to this vexatious affair, it was voted that Messrs. Jno. Case, Esq., Mr. Christopher Phillips, Mr. Jno. Gardiner, and Mr. Samuel Browne, should write to the Assessors, and desire them to call in and re-consider that Rate Bill, and either generously (as they apprehend they ought to do) expunge and erase said Doctor’s name and Rate, or, at least, order their Collector to forbear either distraining goods, or imprisoning the person of the said Doctor, until an opportunity afford of knowing the mind of ye Legislature in that matter, and a letter was wrote, and signed by these four gentlemen according to ye purpose of the above resolution.”

At February Sessions in Providence, 1769, 12 years after the death of Dr. McSparran, it was voted that “all lands or other real estates, granted

or purchased for religious uses, or for other uses
of schools within this Colony, be, and the same are
hereby exempted from taxation."



THE OLD CHURCH.

Before the Steeple Blew Down. (pp. 152-153.)

CHAPTER IX.

New Incumbents.

THE Rev. Samuel Fayerweathier was appointed, by the S. P. G., as successor to Dr. McSparran, and opened his mission August 24, 1760. More than two years had elapsed since the decease of the former Rector, and the Parish had only infrequent ministrations. It was with great joy that the people hailed the newcomer.

“The Society offered £50 salary per annum, with the condition that St. Paul’s Parish should provide £20 and a suitable Glebe, as it promised to do.”

“Mr. Fayerweather was a native of Boston, Mass. He was graduated from Harvard College in 1743. Was ordained a Congregational minister, and was settled over the Second Congrega-

tional Church in Newport in 1754. He went to England, where he was ordained Presbyter in the Episcopal Church in 1756. The degree of Master of Arts was conferred upon him by the University of Oxford, the same year."

He found St. Paul's in rather a reduced state, but after a year of faithful labor and effort, he reported "a favorable increase, and a growth in the Grace and virtues of the Christian life."

In a letter to the Society in England, 1761, he "deplores the severity of the temperature in the church in winter, and begs permission to hold services (as did his predecessor), during the extreme cold season, in his house, the Glebe."

In response to his request, the Society "desires him, if possible, to make his church warm and comfortable in the severest weather, but, if that cannot be done, and his house is large enough for the reception of all who are willing to attend, the poor as well as those of better rank, he may have leave to perform service in his own house when it is absolutely necessary, and not otherwise."

The Rev. Dr. Fayerweather is said to have been "popular in his parish. He was an able and in-

distrions preacher, and left several manuscript volumes of sermons, which are reputed by those who have perused them to be productions of talent and piety.” He read the Church service with great effect, and those who survived him speak of the solemnity and pathos with which he performed these devotions, as impressing them to this day.

Upon occasion, he could depart from his gravity as the following oft-repeated incident proves:

Reprimanding his parishioners for their negligence in attending church, he said, “You have a thousand frivolous excuses (naming several), but there is none more common with you than the plea of foul weather; but come here, and you will always find Fayer weather.”

In one of his reports to the S. P. G. in 1762, he writes that “he has his dwelling in the midst of persons who take too many occasions of expressing great bitterness against the Church of England. Thus situated he finds it best to be mild and gentle, peaceable and forbearing, which the Society earnestly recommends to him and to all their missionaries. In consequence of this behavior, he says, ‘several have lately conformed to the Church from

the Anabaptists and other persuasions.' In this part of America he finds immersion preferred to sprinkling, among persons of adult years, and whenever it is required he administers it in that way, as the Church directs."

The old Record Book says:

"June 20th, Mr. Fayerweather went to Newport with design to take a passage for New York in *Capt. Leighton*, and being detained by contrary winds, preached both Sundays for the Rev. Mr. Browne. July 9th, sailed for New York and on the 12th, preached in the city, in Trinity Church, for the President of the Episcopal College, the Rev. Dr. Samuel Johnson. From New York Mr. F. proceeded to Philadelphia, and preached for the Rev. Dr. Barelay and the Rev. Dr. Auchmuthy.

"Aug. 9th, preached for Mr. Aspinwall's church, Flushing, Long Island. The 16th, on a sacramental occasion, in St. George's Chapel, New York, and in the afternoon of said day, at Trinity Church, for the Rev. Dr. Auchmuthy, to a very large and respectable congregation.

"On the 21st, embarked and sailed through part of the Sound, and on the passage had the misfor-

tune to be cast away in Hell Gate, and being detained by a hard northeast storm, went ashore at Pell's Manor, and it was the 30th of the month before he arrived at Newport, which he blessed God, the Almighty, his great Preserver, for."

"Sept. 6th. Mr. F. preached to his own little flock, who seemed pleased with his return home. O! may he do much good among them, and always meet with Divine Philanthropy, and protection."

"May 30th (the following year), being Whit-sunday, an adult offered himself to Christian Baptism (who had been bred in the Anabaptistical way) hypothetically, as the Church and Canons direct, by the name of Benjamin."

"July 4th, it having for a long time been dry *whether*; the land being afflicted with the judgment of drought, Mr. F. improved such a Providence from these words, 'And he prayed again, and the heaven gave rain, and the earth brought forth her fruit.' "

"On the 17th of July, 1762, Mr. F. preached in the Baptist meeting house, to a large congregation and performed the Liturgy of the Church of England."

“Feb. the 7th, 1763, Mr. Fayerweather was married to Mrs. Abigail Bours, the surviving relict of the late Peter Bours of Marblehead, in the Church at Newport, by the Rev. Marmaduke Browne, and that day (an exceeding cold day) preached on the occasion from these words, to a large auditory, ‘Do all to the glory of God.’”

“April the 4th, 1763. Mr. Wm. Davis, and family, moved away from the Parsonage House, where they had lived with Mr. Fayerweather for two years, in great unanimity and peace.”

“May 16th, Mr. F. bought a servant, of J. Gardiner, Esq. May he prove a true and faithful servant of Jesus Christ!”

It is right to speak here of the care of the Church for the spiritual welfare of the slaves, at this sad period when traffic in human beings was permissible, and common, in the New England as well as the Southern Colonies.

During Dr. McSparran’s incumbency of St. Paul’s parish, there are frequent records of his faithful ministrations to the colored race.

In one of his reports to the S. P. G. he speaks of “spending an hour every Sunday, immediately pre-

ceding divine service, in catechizing, and instructing these poor wretches, who, for the most part, are extremely ignorant, and whether from the novelty of the thing, or, as he hopes, from a better motive, more than fifty gave their attendance."

Another report is: "Catechized the negroes, and there were near about, or more than one hundred."

We may well believe that Mr. Fayerweather continued the religious oversight and instruction of the slaves, for whom the British Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts had tried to provide.

Dr. Fleetwood of St. Asaph's had, in 1711, preached a sermon setting forth the duty of teaching the negroes in the Christian Faith. His address was printed, and sent to all the missionaries. One exhortation is: "Let me beseech you to consider them not merely as slaves, and upon the same level as laboring beasts, but as *men* slaves, and *women* slaves, who have the same frame and faculties with yourselves, and have souls capable of being made happy, and reason, and understanding to receive instruction in order to it."

In conformity to this injunction the missionaries were obliged to gather together the colored people of their charge, and devote a certain portion of time to their religious instruction.

Dr. McSparran had addressed his parishioners, in emphatic language, in condemnation of the prevailing opinion that it was inconsistent to instruct, baptize or admit slaves to the Holy Communion; and we may be certain that his successor was as conscientious in his Christian duty in this regard.

By the Census of 1748 - 9, the town of South Kingstown had more negroes in it than any other town in Rhode Island, except Newport. This is also true of the Census of 1774, and of 1783. There were some importers of slaves in Narragansett before the passage of the Act of June, 1774, prohibiting the importation of slaves into the Rhode Island Colony, and the old families owned many negroes.

A few more entries from the register of Dr. Fayerweather's day may interest those who cannot have easy access to the ancient records.

"April the 1st, 1771. It was referred to the Minister, Mr. Fayerweather, and to John Gardi-

ner, a Warden, to ask Mr. Whaily, a carpenter, to meet with us on the 15th, in order to give his opinion and judgment relating to the old church, as to its being worth repairing or not. Accordingly, on the 15th we met in St. Paul's Church, at 2 o'clock in the afternoon. Messrs. Whaily and Cole pronounced the old church to be in a ruinous state, and almost past repairing. That it might indeed be patched up for awhile, but that the cost of repairs would be but little short of building a new church. The next question was the erecting of a new church, proposed to be on the spot of land in South Kingstown left by the late Dr. McSparran, on the 'hill lot'—so commonly called."

Anybody who has seen the bleak and exposed spot where the old church had contended with wind and weather for even sixty-four years, would scarcely wonder that the building seemed unfit for repairs even at that early period, and yet the frame still presents a stronger aspect and better endurance, than does many a modern structure.

There is one very peculiar record within the old parchment-covered book, which I must think was made by other than the Rev. rector, the Har-

vard graduate. Possibly it may have been written by the Clerk of the Vestry, who was a pious, but simple minded man.

It runs thus: "On Friday the 8th of April, 1774, Col. Ephrain Gardiner, a member in full communion with St. Paul's, was seized in his field, with an apoplexy, and on Saturday the 10th he died, and on Wednesday the 13th he was buried. Before his interment his corp was carried into St. Paul's Church, where a funeral sermon was preached by Dr. Fayerweather, by the desire of the bereaved family, to a very large, serious, attentive congregation, consisting as it was judged of above 300 people. After divine service was over, the funeral obsequies was carried in procession to the farm of Capt. Samuel Gardiner, and buried there, after the manner, and according to the method, of the Church of England."

The last entry made by Mr. Fayerweather, is Sunday, Nov. 6, 1774. His ministry from that time seemed to be rather from house to house, than in the parish church.

"The controversy between the colonies and the mother country, had at this period assumed a seri-

ous aspect. The majority of the society of which Mr. Fayerweather was pastor, being Whigs, they objected to the use of prayers for the King and the Royal family, and for the success of his majesty's arms. The rector felt that he could not conscientiously dispense with them, without the violation of his ordination vows, although he was personally esteemed as a friend to the American cause. The church was consequently closed, and Mr. Fayerweather preached occasionally in private houses, until his death, which occurred in the summer of 1781."

He was buried beside the Rev. Dr. McSparran, under the old church altar.

He says in his will: "I give all my library and books to King's (now Columbia) College, and ten pounds sterling, and my large picture of myself. And my desire is that the Corporation may suffer said picture to be hung up in the Library room of said College forever.

"Also my silver framed square picture of myself, to my sister Hannah Winthrop of Cambridge. My wife's picture of herself to her Niece, the wife of John Channing. My oval picture of myself,

framed with silver, to my nephew, John Winthrop of Boston, Merchant."

I further quote from the *History of the Narragansett Church*:

"The executor of his will, Matthew Robinson, Esq., received Mr. Fayerweather's effects, and being aged and infirm, neglected the injunctions of the testator. He died ten years afterward at an advanced age, and insolvent, and the pictures bequeathed by the Rev. Mr. Fayerweather were sold at auction as Mr. Robinson's property, there not being any legatees or friends in this quarter to claim them.

"The large picture, painted by Copley, in his academical honors, is now in my house," says the Hon. Wilkins Updike. "The other portraits were in the town some few years since. His library was also sold and is now lost, except a few volumes in the possession of the Church in Narragansett."

From another source I learn that "a portrait of the Rev. Dr. Fayerweather was left by the purchaser, Mr. Hazard, at the Glebe for awhile, and some mischievous children, living there, made a

target of it, shooting out the eyes, and so defacing it as to render it useless."

Whoever is in possession of any of the books or pictures of this worthy rector of the old church, would do honor to his memory, and service to Columbia College, by placing in that institution such reliques as were designed for it by the Rev. Dr. Fayerweather's last will and testament.

The unsettled state of the country, subsequent to the Revolution, paralyzed the churches in many quarters, and St. Paul's sadly felt the general depression. During the war, the church had been used as a barrack for the American soldiery, and the Parish Record contains no entry from 1774 to April 1784, when nine persons met together, and a Committee was appointed to invite the Rev. Mr. Fogg, the rector of the Episcopal church at Pomfret, Conn.

He declined the invitation, and the Society did not meet again until 1787, when the Rev. William Smith was appointed reector.

"Mr. Smith had the reputation of great learning. He was thorough in his knowledge of Ecclesiastical History; was enthusiastic in the study and

love and composition of music, and was a constructor of Church organs. To him we owe the Prayer Book “Office of Institution of Ministers into Parishes or Churches,” and also a large work on *Primitive Psalmody*, designed to show the impropriety of singing Metre Psalms in public worship, and the wisdom of returning to the ancient practice of Chanting. During his incumbency it is said that the *Venite* was first chanted in America, in St. Paul’s, Narragansett.

“Mr. Smith had a great fondness for preaching extemporaneously. He had the Scotch accent, but was interesting, instructive, and eloquent. His birth and education were in Scotland.

“He left St. Paul’s for Trinity, Newport, in 1790. In 1797, he accepted a call to Norwalk, Conn.; had a common school in New York in 1800; was principal of the Episcopal Academy, Cheshire, Conn., from 1802 to 1806; officiated for a while in the parishes of Milford and West Haven, and occupied much of his time in writing upon theological subjects; was the author of a series of Essays on the Christian Ministry, and

died in New York, April 6, 1821. Great respect was paid to his opinion and learning."

Succeeding Dr. Smith, in 1791, Walter Gardiner was chosen Lay Reader in St. Paul's, Narragansett, and afterwards rector, in which office he continued until 1794. He was connected with the Rev. Dr. McSparran, and the Updikes, Robinsons, and many old Narragansett families.

In 1794, the Rev. Joseph Warren had the rectorship of the parish. During his incumbency, "December 3rd, 1799, the vestry voted, 9 to 2, to remove the old church from its original, and inconvenient location, to the village of Wickford, and to build a new church for the South Kingstown people on the site given for that purpose in the will of the Rev. Dr. McSparran, and that the rector preach alternately in Wickford and in South Kingstown."

In 1800, the old church was taken down, carried to its present site, and put together again upon the lot donated by Lodowick Updike, grandson of the Lodowick who gave the former foundation. By this removal the graves of the Rev. Drs. McSparran and Fayerweather were left without monu-

ment, surrounded by many other deceased parishioners.

From my maternal grandmother I learned that when the old church was re-constructed, the pews were not put in place immediately, but that for some little time the parishioners sat upon long boards that were propped by strong logs. Then the sixteen square "box" pews were given their old position around the walls, and in the center were put ten long slips, instead of the former square pews.

The Chancel was semi-circular, with an old-fashioned, high, oblong reading desk and a "wine glass" pulpit above, to which one winding stairease led. The altar was by itself, on the east. Later, the communion table was placed in front of the reading desk, against the pulpit.

In 1809, Mr. Isaac B. Pierce of Newport became Lay Reader.

In 1811, a steeple was built at the west end of the church, and a new entrance made to the galleries, which had previously been reached by a staircase from the main floor.

In 1812, the Rev. James Bowers was elected

rector, holding services in the parishes of North and South Kingstown, until 1814.

There was then a vacancy until 1817, when Mr. Lemuel Burge, a Candidate for Holy Orders, was sent to St. Paul's, Narragansett, by Bishop Griswold, with this commendation from the Rev. Truman Marsh, of St. Michael's, Litchfield, Conn.:

"I am well satisfied he is firmly attached to the government, doctrine, and discipline of the Episcopal Church. He is a good scholar, and reads the prayers of the Church with great propriety, and solemnity, and bids fair to be a useful clergyman."

Just previous to the coming of Mr. Burge, the first Sunday School that was ever had in the village of Wickford, was started by Mr. John Brown of East Greenwich, in concert with, and by the advice of Mr. Waldo, a Presbyterian minister.

These gentlemen gained the interest of Mrs. Wm. G. Shaw, a Churchwoman, who was a daughter of Mr. Samuel Brenton, and she so persuaded the people, that in the course of a few months there was a gathering of such numbers as put to blush the present diminished schools.

From her diary I copy:

“Elamsville, 1817. The 4th Sunday in June, two large black girls, five women, and seven children, attended my house. My sister’s daughter, Susan Mumford, and my three eldest daughters, teach classes, and my third son also, aged twelve.”

By the last of August her record is:

“To-day near a hundred children attended, and walked in procession from the Academy to the town house, to hear the Methodist preaching.”

Mrs. Shaw’s diary also speaks of the assembling of “sixteen ladies in the new Baptist meeting house, for charitable work among the poor,” and of her “walking with Sarah Baily two miles out of town, and calling at every house for subscriptions of money and clothing. The men, too, contributed for the welfare of the needy children.”

The old way of religious instruction was by catechizing in the church, a method of training up children which the good old Dr. McSparran said “the people were wonderfully enamored with.”

It was not originally the design of the Sunday Schools to teach such as could have home care and culture. Only such as were destitute of these

family advantages and privileges, were to be sought out, and Christianly nurtured and taught, and with this idea the Sunday School in Wickford was started.

While Mr. Burge was Lay Reader in North and South Kingstown, a church was built at Tower Hill by his energetic help.

“May 3rd, 1819, John J. Watson, Esq., and Dr. Wm. G. Shaw, were, by the vestry of St. Paul’s; appointed a Committee to present their most grateful thanks and acknowledgements to Mr. Lemuel Burge for the many disinterested and important services rendered to this Society during an officiation amongst us.”

Mr. Burge had gone to New York for ordination, not designing to return to the Narragansett parish, but yielded to a renewed unanimous call.

“On Friday, April 1st, 1820, he was ordained deacon by Bishop Hobart, in St. John’s Church, Varick St., and on the 4th of August, 1820, was advanced to the priesthood by Bishop Griswold, in St. John’s Church, Providence, R. I.

“June the 6th, while yet in the diaconate, he was married in the old church, by the Rev. Salmon

Wheaton of Trinity Church, Newport, to Elizabeth Frances, daughter of Dr. Wm. G. Shaw, and Elizabeth Brenton.

"He took his young and beautiful bride to the Glebe house, South Kingstown, for their earliest residence. There their eldest child was born, but they removed to Wickford after a year or two and the Glebe ceased to be the abode of the Rectors of St. Paul's."

The American Revolution had made great changes in the Narragansett country. The Landed Aristocracy became reduced in their possessions. Large tracts were divided into small farms, which passed to other hands.

The Church felt the sad reverses, and when the Rev. Mr. Burge entered upon his Rectorship, St. Paul's was no longer under a Missionary Board, but was dependent upon the subscriptions of the parishioners, with the added accruments from the Glebe property, and a few donations which varied from time to time, according to the condition of crops, and other productions.

By the time the Rector's family was increased by the advent of five children, the small support



Samuel Burge

(pp. 172-173.)

from the Parish was wholly inadequate to the growing necessities.

Therefore this brave servant of God, unwilling to press the people beyond their ability, followed the example of the Apostle Paul, and ministered largely to his own needs, and to those of the home brood. Like his predecessor, Dr. McSparran, he took into his household young gentlemen for education. Among these were Charles Smith, the stepson of Bishop Griswold, and Thomas Fales, subsequently a worthy Presbyter in the Church. Mr. Burge never allowed any other care to interfere with the sacred duties of his holy office, which were discharged with loving and earnest fidelity. To preach the Gospel was his paramount desire, and never failing delight. So great was his zeal and interest in his church and parishioners, that even when health and strength failed, he could not bear to give up his cure, and such was the sincere esteem and regard of his people, that twice when the need of rest induced his resignation, he was so eagerly and unanimously recalled, that he resumed for a while his work among them, until positively

feeble health forced him to give up the care of a parish and remove to another locality.

In 1823, he was commissioned by the Parish of St. Paul's to go to Albany and purchase a bell for the old church. He spent a whole week going from New York up the Hudson in a sloop. The bell that he bought weighed 430 pounds, less by 2,570 than that of the Baptists, which was not as sweet-toned, but was much more powerful. Many a time have I heard it toll the departure of some soul from the village.

In after years the church bell became cracked, and was exchanged in part payment for the one that now summons the people to the new church.

From 1817 to 1832, the Rector of St. Paul's preached alternately in the North and South Kingstown churches. It was no small undertaking to travel back and forth for so many miles in all weather, hot or cold, wet or dry, though the old-time horseback riding was superceded by the two-wheeled chaise, and other vehicles.

There was, moreover, but little spiritual progress to encourage the faithful worker in God's vineyard.

In 1824, Mr. Burge reported 29 communicants, 35 Baptisms, 39 Sunday Scholars. In 1829, 43 communicants.

After this the Baptists began a Sunday School which took some scholars from the Episcopal Church.

The fluctuations were disheartening, but the good Rector never despaired, and the fruit of his persevering effort is evident even to this late period, while he is at rest, and other men have entered into the enjoyment of it.

The separation of the North and South Kings-town parishes in 1833 rendered the duties of the Rector of St. Paul's less arduous. Tower Hill Church had missionary care, and finally united with the Wakefield congregation. The building that Mr. Burge had been instrumental in erecting was blown down in a severe gale, and never restored, the population of that region becoming so sparse, that a place of worship was no longer needed in that locality.

Mr. Burge was an old-fashioned Prayer Book Churchman. Part of his theological training was by his Pastor, the Rev. Truman Marsh of Litch-

field, Conn., and part by the learned Dr. Wm. Smith. I suppose he would now be called somewhat “advanced,” as he eschewed the broad, free notions of many of his contemporaries, and saw “nothing amiss” in the noted Oxford tracts that made such a furore in his time.

His own sermons were plain, yet pungent, and bear worthy comparison with some of the modern pulpit utterances. But his chief attraction lay in his reading of the service. This was incomparable. When officiating at a marriage, he used no book, and his tone and manner made a wonderful impression.

During his incumbency of St. Paul’s he wore the black gown and white linen cambric bands, and, as the fashion was, black silk gloves in desk and pulpit. There was no place for a change from surplice to gown. The custom of those days was, when one wore the surplice, or robe of purity, to use it only when reading the service, and to substitute the black, or scholastic gown, when preaching or “using one’s own words.”

Parson Warren had an old-fashioned, wide, white linen surplice, for I have heard from an

authentic source, that it took my grandmother three weeks, at intervals, to darn the little bracks that time had made in it, and a member of his Parish who is nearly a hundred years old, speaks of the Parson's awkwardness in changing his robes behind the desk.

The use of bands has passed away as a ministerial accessory. I have often wondered what was the significance of the "bands" which my father always wore in church, and which we daughters took a sacred pride in making, and in keeping immaculate.

The Rev. Dr. Dix says: "My impression is that they were intended to symbolize the Law, possibly the two tables of the Law. Certainly they were not of Puritan invention, for they were worn almost universally as a part of the costume of the Roman Clergy. An engraving of Cardinal Dubois, which now hangs in my library, represents him in a magnificent and very large pair of bands, seemingly black with a white edge. He was born in 1656 and died in 1723. I may also here note that the French and English Barristers still wear bands as a part of their professional costume.

The French lawyers wear, or did when I was last in Paris, great big bands reaching half way down their chests, besides which they wear small birettas and black gowns.”

The Rev. Prof. Russell says: “I began my ministry with them, and in those days a clergyman would as soon have gone without his stole as without his bands. It appears that originally they were a part of every gentleman’s dress, being simply the ends of the long neck-tie. The Judiciary held to them with gown and wig.”

A German Lutheran minister told me the other day that they are a part of the stole, for which they are substituted in his Church.

The Rev. Mr. Burge was transferred from the Diocese of Rhode Island to that of New York, September 29th, 1858, and there, when his health would admit, exercised the functions of his sacred office wherever they were needed or desired. In Greenfield, Flatbush, Bay Ridge, Fort Hamilton, and East New York, as well as in the various Brooklyn churches, his voice has often been heard. His latest ministerial association was at St. Peter’s, with the Rev. John Paddock. In that

Parish he received the filial attention of the Rector, and the loving consideration of the congregation, until his sudden death by a sad casualty in 1864.

It was while pursuing his route home from New York, after a visit to a married daughter there, that on Broadway, near Chambers Street, he was knocked down by an express wagon, and received the injury which in two weeks ended his earthly career.

“A man without reproach,” was the testimony of one of the Wardens of his old St. Paul’s Parish; and the Resolutions of St. Peter’s Vestry are expressive of heartfelt esteem of this aged saint, whose departure they sincerely mourned. His funeral was from St. Peter’s, and his burial in Greenwood Cemetery.

He was a descendant of the Mugglestones of Mugglestone Manor, near Shrewsbury, England, which came into possession of the Stanlys, by intermarriage with the female branch.

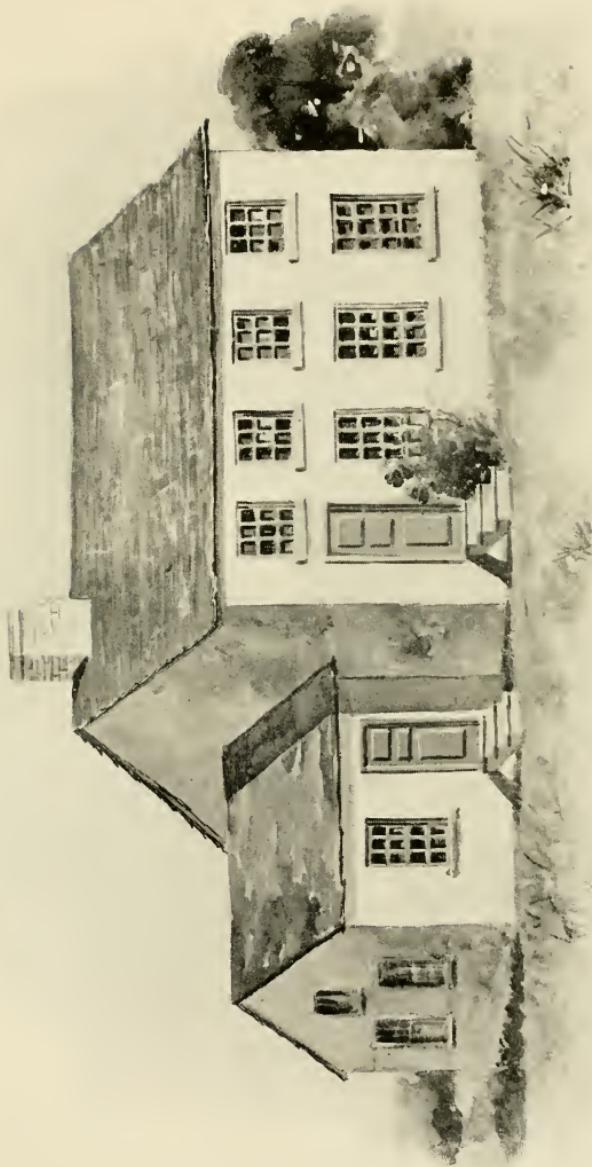
As this record would be voluminous indeed, should I attempt the personal history of each incumbent of St. Paul’s, Narragansett, church, I am

reluctantly forced to the simple entry of all the subsequent Rectors, with the duration of their services.

The Rev. Francis Peck occupied the Parish from June, 1834, to September, 1836, while his predecessor was recuperating from a temporary indisposition.

After Mr. Burge's final resignation in 1840, the following clergy were at various times in charge:

Rev. John H. Rouse, July 7, 1840, to June 5, 1849; Rev. Daniel Henshaw, Sept. 17, 1849, to March 14, 1853; Rev. A. B. Flanders, May 8, 1854, to April 2, 1866 (Mr. Flanders was absent as Chaplain of the 4th R. I. Regiment from Sept., 1861, to Nov., 1862); Rev. W. H. Collins supplied from Oct., 1861, to Oct., 1862; Rev. I. J. Sanderson, Oct. 15, 1866, to Sept. 14, 1868; Rev. Daniel Goodwin, April 6, 1869, to Nov. 1, 1874; Rev. George J. Magill, Feb. 15, 1875, to March 30, 1876; Rev. Wm. W. Ayres, June 12, 1876, to Oct., 1887; Rev. A. J. Thompson, Oct. 23, 1887, to July, 1890; Rev. Samuel Borden Smith, July, 1890, to 1897; Rev. Dr. Goodwin officiating from 1897 until the call of Rev. Frederick Cole, the present incumbent.



THE OLD GLEBE.
In its original condition. (pp. 180 181.)

CHAPTER X.

The Glebe House and the Old Foundation.

THE last clerical incumbent of the Glebe was the Rev. Lemuel Burge.

A description of the place as it originally was, says: "The interior of the house presents those rough hewn timbers, massive beams crossing the low ceilings, with the solid paneling, and elaborate and inaccessible mantel-pieces of the colonial period, cavernous fire-places, grim black rafters supporting the gambrel roof, etc., etc. The chief room, with windows on three sides, was the household chapel, where the congregation frequently gathered for social worship."

My mother used to tell us of her honeymoon, passed in that weird and lonely habitation, and of the welcome coming of our eldest sister, to give brightness and cheer.

Not until I was a child of eight or ten years old did I make my first visit to the precincts that were so hallowed to my imagination through her graphic descriptions. Young though I was, I was singularly impressed by every feature of the lonely yet beautiful country—the rough roads; the stony land; the green woods; the high hills; and the charming glimpses of river and sea.

When we reached the long, steep McSparran Hill, I could have leaped for joy, as I discovered at its foot the dusky, brown house that once held the venerated McSparran and Fayerweather, as well as my own beloved progenitors.

Rude stone steps up an embankment that was securely walled, another short flight to a second terrace, a walk through a path bordered on each side by gooseberry bushes, and a few old-fashioned flowers and shrubs, and I reached the entrance to this plain but substantial building, that had borne the storms of many years. The tenants were apparently poor in this world's goods, but abounded in that rare quality, a free and whole-souled hospitality. I could appreciate the gude-wife's putting aside her household duties, in order

to accompany her little guest to the fruitful blackberry vines that covered the rocky fields near by.

My grandfather had left me in her care while he crossed the Narragansett or South Ferry, on his favorite passage to Newport. Never shall I forget that rustic visit. The "big room," the simple and quaint adornments, the gay red-and-black flannel fly-catcher suspended from the center of the great crossbeams; the family dinner, with dessert of custard pie made with quails' eggs instead of hens'; the tottering-legged old dog that feebly followed my steps; the little square window panes through which my mother had gazed upon the Petaquamseutt and upon the quiet landscape.

I ran to the top of the high hills back of the house and looked abroad upon Canonicut Island, and the Bay, and Newport glistening in the sunlight beyond, and, afar off, the broad Atlantic. It was an awesome view, as I stood alone amid the vastness and silence of nature, and I wanted my grandfather to hasten back and take me to a living presenee. But for the green meadows and cattle grazing, and fields of corn, and thrifty vegetables

close by, I would have been still more homesick, I think.

Later in my life I visited again the dear old Glebe, that must always have for me a peculiar charm. It was in October, after frost. The sun had scarcely risen when I took my seat in the Stonington cars from East Greenwich. A white rime covered the meadows, and glistened with myriad gems. The woods presented a varied aspect, as we flitted past; now a reddish brown, then a bright scarlet; here the tall, silvery boles of the birch, with crests of green and gold; and there a mirror of water reflecting sky and trees. Now and then a grove of cedar or pine, to brighten the approaching wintry dearth.

At Kingston Junction I took the branch road to Narragansett Pier, where a kind friend was to meet me, and drive five miles to the desired point. The hotels at the great resort were deserted, the day was calm, and there was little surf. The roar of ocean was subdued. We gladly turned inland, toward McSparran's Hill.

Soon the Petaquamscutt was visible, widened to a glassy lake, which spread north and south as

far as the eye could reach. What joy to me to come again to the old brown house! The lilac bushes still hedged the terrace; the honey blobs were gone from the gooseberry bushes, and the "sweet pinks" had withered on the ancestral roots, "the remnant from Dominie Burge's planting," I was told.

Through a small entry we passed to the right, into the "great room," which has been changed by tenants to suit their convenience. It pleased me in imagination to do away with the partitions, and repeople the broad space with the old time worshippers. I could fancy the hurtling storm sweeping over the country driftways, and rendering access to the old church quite impossible. I could see the zealous Christians making their way to the comfortable home chapel, and gathering around the long table that served as altar and pulpit. In the wide fireplace the big logs blazed and crackled. The face of the genial rector glowed with his heart's loving kindness toward his earnest flock, and prayer and praise hallowed this temporary sanctuary, where masters, mistresses, and servants, joined in the solemn worship.

In one's drives about that part of the Narragansett country, one can now scarcely realize its former condition, when the "Plantations" were under good cultivation, and brought worthy revenue. Hundreds of broad acres with rich grass and large herds of cattle, and extensive grain fields, and every indication of wealth and thrift, characterized the colonial days. The spacious mansions with lordly gentlemen in scarlet coats, with lace ruffles, small clothes, silk stockings, brilliant knee and shoe buckles, hair frizzed, clubbed, or quened. Queenly ladies in brocaded silk or shining satin, cushioned head dresses, and high heeled slippers, have no more place in that comparatively barren domain. The change is marvelous. The numerous servants have dwindled to one or two helpers. The loom and wheel are silent. The land is sterile, save here and there a small garden plot that is carefully cultivated by its owner. It saddens one to mark the deterioration and obvious devastation. Yet the ghosts of a departed grandeur haunt the old places, and have for me a singular attraction and fascination.

Once again, recently, I sought the old Glebe.

We drove from Wickford up past Washington Academy and the Roman Catholic church, through Bellville and Silver Spring; along Ridge Hill, with the thick woods to the right and rolling country to the left, the trees on the right towering far above the road, with their trunks extending a hundred feet below. Past Watson's Corner we went; down Walmsley Hill and along the green lane, with the beautiful river for miles on our left, and beyond it, Boston Neck and Narragansett Bay.

Our route was lined with verdure and blossoms; chestnut and oak; low birch and locust; wild roses scattered everywhere, and thrown in garlands over the sweet fern and bayberry bushes; and wild iris, and other flowers in the swampy meadows, and along the stone walls.

The old house was desolate indeed. No signs of habitation, except a few thrifty geraniums in a circle in the front yard, and a kitchen garden not far away. Peeping in at the curtainless windows, after knocking repeatedly at the door, and meeting no response, we saw only dismantled rooms.

Despairing of entrance, we were about to leave, when a sprightly young man, with a handsome

Scotch collie, came from the direction of the river to greet us. He politely gave us permission to view the interior of the house, apologizing for the condition of things, and saying that he and another young Southerner, had come in the depth of winter to keep Bachelors' Hall in the famous Narragansett country, where a lady friend had purchased the McSparran premises. Now that summer had come, they were thoroughly enjoying their rural freedom. With the help of horses, dogs, boat, and guns, and a bout occasionally at agriculture, they passed the time very happily as a change from fashionable life.

We took advantage of the privilege to examine the antiquated dwelling in every part. It seemed fast falling to decay. The "Ell" was entirely gone, and the frame work and windows of the main building showed marked signs of age. The immense fireplace had been contracted for stoves, and altogether there were few traces of the former aspect, either within or without. I was informed that the present owner does not wish the house renewed, but there need certain repairs to keep it in

existence. With its historic associations it ought to be preserved as a sacred relic.

Upstairs and down, the great rooms are cut up into small ones, four or five on each floor. A rough, unfinished attic is the chief reminder of early days.

The outside natural scenery can never change. The place might be made very charming as a summer residence. Wakefield, and Kingston, and Narragansett Pier, and Wickford, and Newport, are easily accessible.

I learn that a lead mine has lately been discovered on the premises, and, sentiment aside, this may give intrinsic value to its possession.

Leaving the Glebe, we pursued our route to the old Foundation of St. Paul's. Many of the grave stones are dilapidated and the inscription obliterated, but upon some, the names of the ancient families are legible.

Amid the loneliness and desolation of this burial ground, there is a noticeable monument, a cross of white marble, bearing this inscription :

"Erected in grateful memory of James McSparran, D.D., Missionary of the S. P. G., and Rector of the Church then here from 1721 to his death, 1757.

By the authority of the Diocese of Rhode Island
in 1868.

He was buried beneath this stone.

Here also lie the remains of the Rev. Samuel Fayerweather,
his successor, from 1760 to 1781.

St. Paul's Church was built here in 1707, and removed to
Wickford, 1800."

There is also a stone recently put by loving
relatives, "In memory of Samuel Brenton, and his
wife, Susan Cook."

The yard has a respectable wall around it, but
wild blackberry vines trip one at every step, and
only in one corner did I see a vestige of former
care and culture, in some old-time box, lilies, and
phlox, and a stunted evergreen tree.

The sexton's house, near the bars where we
enter the grounds surrounding the Foundation, is
pretty nearly demolished, but so long as there is
the slightest remnant, it will be of interest to
those who have any knowledge of the venerable
Martin Reed, who not only had the charge of the
church edifice, but was also parish clerk, and
always "led the singing, and often in the absence
of a clergyman, read the service in church, and at
funerals."

"He was the son of Robert Reed, the Com-
mander of a merchant ship, who was accidentally

killed when entering Newport, leaving all his effects undefined and unattainable. His widowed mother bound out this seven-year-old son to a Diaper Weaver, and died."

The boy grew up with great yearning for knowledge, and with the ambition to distinguish himself as a manufacturer, which he did.

He was the father of the Rev. Dr. John Reed, of Christ Church, Poughkeepsie, New York, who administered to him the Holy Sacrament at the time of his death, at eighty-one years of age. The Rev. Mr. Burge officiated at his funeral.

It will not be out of place to speak here of the sacred vessels at this period in use at the Holy Communion.

During the incumbency of the Rev. Dr. McSparran, a silver tankard was presented to St. Paul's, with this inscription :

"A legacy from Nathaniel Kay, Esq., for the use of the
Blessed Sacrament in St. Paul's, Narragansett.

Lux perpetua Credentibus sola,
1734."

"Mr. Kay succeeded Jahleel Brenton as Collector of the King's Customs for the Colony of Rhode Island. He was liberal toward the Church

of England, and gave valuable legacies for parish schools in Bristol and Newport. He lived near the head of Touro Street, where he died in 1734, and was buried in Trinity Churchyard, just at the left as you enter the gate."

Long before the gift of the tankard from Mr. Kay, Queen Anne (deceased 1714), who seemed to have the Church in the American Colonies very near her heart, sent to St. Paul's, Narragansett, a



BAPTISMAL FONT AND COMMUNION VESSELS.

Presented to St. Paul's Church by Queen Anne.

silver chalice, paten, and baptismal basin, which were our admiration and peculiar care all the days of our life in the old church.

The cup bears the following marks:

1. An inverted G, which is the maker's mark,
John Gibbons, Forster Lane, London.

2. Britannia Lion's head, erased, which marks
the cycle from March, 1696, to June, 1720.

3. The year mark, or date letter, in this case
E, and fixing date as 1706-7.

The paten has the same marks.

In addition, the chalice is marked "Anna
Regina."

The cup and paten are kept as sacred reliques,
and, since much worn, new vessels are substituted
for general use.

By a singular order of the vestry, July 24,
1851, the baptismal bowl was melted and con-
verted, I think, into the paten now in use.

Its alienation from the original shape and pur-
pose, is a cause of deep regret, especially to those
who grew up in the old church, and knew no other
baptismal font.

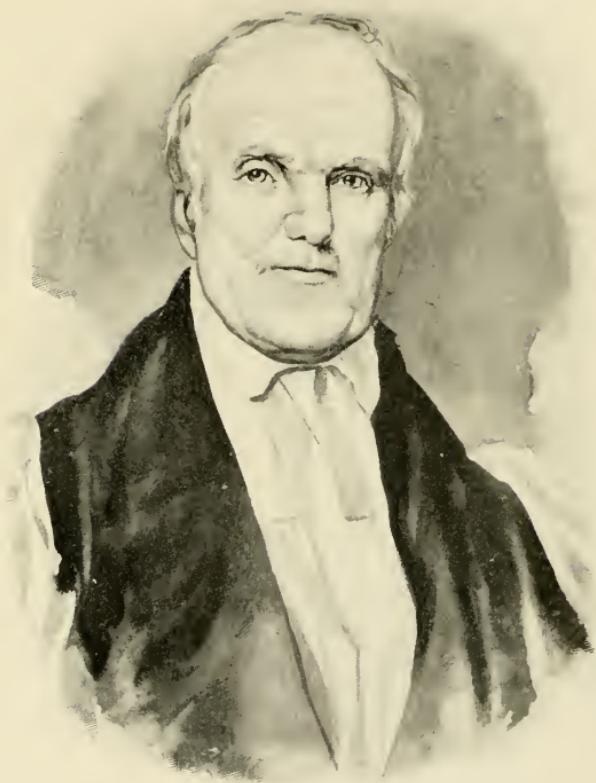
CHAPTER XI.

Personal Reminiscences.

AS I return to the Venice of my nativity, after years of wandering, and of residence elsewhere, so many vivid memories crowd upon me that it is difficult to record them with anything of system, or continuity. I shall, therefore, make no attempt at order of narration, but shall write spontaneously, as heart and thought may dictate.

Among the happy recollections of my earliest childhood, the old brown church in the Lane is prominent.

Better to me than St. Mark's of the City across the Seas, with its glory and beauty of architecture, and painting, and sculpture, and rich adornment, is the rude structure in which I received Baptism in my infancy, and Confirmation in my earliest



ALEX. V. GRISWOLD. D. D.,
Bishop of the Eastern Diocese. (pp. 194 195.)

teens at the hands of Bishop Griswold, and where I was rooted and grounded in the doctrines of the Christian Faith.

That dear old saintly prelate comes before me in his peculiar garb, small clothes and silk stockings, that quite prevented my recognition of one of his order in any other costume until recent unison of style has regulated my ideas.

In his visitations to St. Paul's, he always stayed at my father's house, and his serene face, sweet voice, and gentle manners, were to us children a felt benediction. Sometimes Mrs. Griswold accompanied him. I recall one season in particular when she kept her bonnet on all day, at meals, and still wore it when she retired to her room for the night. My curiosity was not satisfied until I heard her say to my mother, that she adopted this rule in order to obviate the necessity and inconvenience of taking caps with her upon her journeys with the Bishop.

The old church was thronged when the annual visitation of the Diocesan was made, as well as on every special or festive occasion.

From the quaint "Campanile," the soft-toned

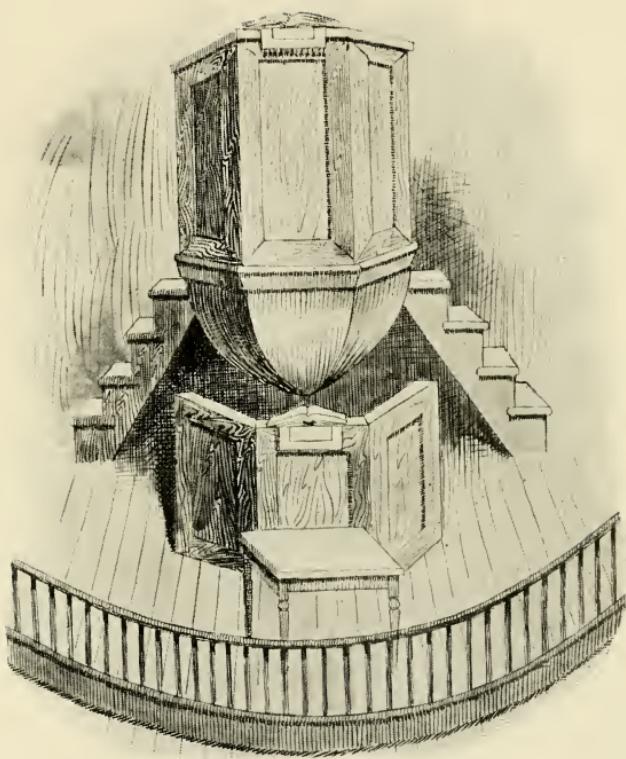
bell called the villagers to worship. Often have I climbed the narrow stairs leading to the summit of the tower where the metal tongue held sway, that I might get a peep at the broad country through the four latticed windows just below the summit.



One calm winter night, December the thirty-first, 1866, this steeple fell to the ground and was never replaced, as the old church had been deserted in 1848 for the new one.

I miss this feature, but they say the building is now as it was originally when the people went through "driftways" to reach it, and held pleasant chat, before the hour of service, around the "Old Foundation."

It is my habit, nowadays, when in my native



THE "THREE-DECKER."

(pp. 196-197.)

village, to go often to the quiet, secluded church for reverie, and communion with the past.

The very walls are eloquent. I hear no more profitable preaching than the echoes of the long ago.

The scenes of other days revive. The square “boxes” rise before me and are peopled with familiar forms and faces. To the warden’s pew is attached the official staff, black, with top and spiral band of gilt. The chancel is semi-circular, with a “three decker” arrangement, communion table, reading desk, and wine-glass pulpit, with so narrow a seat that one could not comfortably rest upon it. Back of the pulpit, high above the preacher’s head, are two small paned windows, draped with green moreen, fringed, and heavily tasseled, and looped up, and held by rods and gilt adornments. The cushions for Bible and Prayer Book, on pulpit and desk, are of crimson velvet, with fringe of the same color. The old worn Bible is still there, but the modern incongruous, oak-stained pulpit was substituted for the original in 1835, when a new clergyman had charge, and the chancel was then made straight, and three narrow pews, on each side,

were formed from the square ones previously existing.

I shut my eyes to this strange appearance, and dream on of the olden time. The singers are in the front gallery, opposite the clergyman. A tuning fork indicates the key, and a big bass viol accompanies the voices. A few years pass, and a small pipe organ is substituted, and manipulated by the rector's two eldest daughters, and their aunt, alternately. Frequently there is the addition of a flute played by one of the wardens.

The voluntary is sounding in my ears. The footsteps of the assembling congregation mingle with the music. The rector, followed by a troop of little children, comes in his robes along his garden path, through a small gate, across the lane, to the house of prayer. The service begins.

After the second lesson a baby is presented for Baptism. As is often the case on such occasions, when the prescribed number of sponsors has not been provided, "Aunt Lee" or one of her sisters of the Updike family, steps forward to fill the gap. I wonder how many regenerate children in the

Church Triumphant will be claimed as the spiritual progeny of these dear old ladies!

The summer time in the church in the lane is delightful. The door and windows are flung wide open. A broad expanse of the heavens is visible, and the sweet, fresh air exhilarating. Young peo-



CHURCH DOOR, OLD ST. PAUL'S

ple and old, are dressed in delicate soft cambrics or muslins, as becomes the heated season. There is little vain show. It is an age of sense and reason, and restfulness and peace.

The winter brings a different aspect, though as blessed an experience. The Christmas time especially, is most precious in all of its associations. Resinous evergreens, pine and cedar, and graceful creeping jenny, rise from floor to ceiling,

making a perfect forest of the holy temple. For a week, busy hands have been adorning and making glorious the place for the coming of our Lord and Saviour, the Babe of Bethlehem.

On the eve of the Nativity, the windows of the church are ablaze with lighted candles in every pane, and the country around is attracted by the grand illumination.

Through all of my childhood, there was never a Christmas Eve without this commemoration. The service in church, with jubilant song, and solemn, yet hopeful, sermon, seemed a sacred prelude to the bright morn when Christ the Lord was born, and the feast was kept in all its fulness. I can never cease to feel the hallowing influence of the old time Christmas seasons in St. Paul's, Narragansett.

The marks of the profuse decorations are still visible on walls and pillars. No one regarded it as a defacement to drive nails everywhere if only the end were attained, and the house of God was made beautiful. The prints are suggestive to us, who can fill out the artistic designs.

During most of the earlier New England winters, the lanes leading to the old church, were white

and crisp with snow. Merry sleigh bells saluted the ear, as the parishioners came from far and near, to keep holy day.

Sometimes the frost and cold were so severe, and the paths so untrodden, that the worship was held in the rector's parlor, as it used to be in the Glebe house.

About the centre of the main street, opposite what is now Wall Street, and next to the Wickford House, was the residence of the rector. It is a gambrel roofed, two story and attic building, with an "Ell," which has been added, since occupied by strangers.

After some years of roving from tenement to tenement, the "Dominie" anticipated a portion of his patrimony, and purchased with it a positive home for his family, where holy and happy associations might cluster and be fixed. When the wind was fierce, and snow and sleet were driving furiously, a few of the nearest neighbors used to assemble around the rector's hearthstone, for prayer and praise. I can hear the wailing sound of the wind through the key hole, mingling weirdly with the tones of the quaint spinette, and the accompanying

voices. The old-fashioned fireplace sends forth a cheery blaze, the logs sparkle and crackle, and the polished brasses reflect serious faces. The gravity of their elders influences the children, who suppress all mirthful impulses, and deport themselves as becomes the day and the occasion.

A description of this New England home in those earlier times, may not be amiss. To many of the present generation the things that were to me precious realities, seem mythical.

The mode of life is now so entirely different, and household arrangements and utensils are so essentially changed.

In my earliest childhood, the gaping chimney places made fresh and healthful the air of the living rooms, and sleeping apartments. In summer we filled them with evergreens, or ferns, or the red berried Asparagus; and in winter the glowing flame and coals were wondrously attractive.

What suggestions in the long black crane with hooks and trammels; the hanging pots with savor of good things to come; the iron bake kettle with blaze beneath, and live coals on top, and browning biscuits peeping out when the cover was raised an

inch for the purpose of inspection ; the Dutch oven on the hearth, with goose or turkey, or other tempting fowl, odorous of sweet herbs and spices, as the crisping process goes on, making impressive the proverb in *Lorna Doone*, “The joy of the mouth is the nose before.”

The old hearthstone has other recollections for us. There, before the lucifer match was common, we made tiny splints from pine shingles, and dipped the ends into melted brimstone, and scorched linen to put in the tinder box, with flint and steel, so that in an emergency we might strike a spark, and be certain of a blaze, even though the curfew should fail, and the hidden coals be worthless and dead.

We had not one of those copper devices that some people used to put close against the chimney back, over the hot ashes ; but the brands and living embers were always raked together at bed-time, and thickly overspread with ashes, and generally, this preserved the nucleus for the next day’s fire.

When it failed, we either got a burning brand from one of our neighbors, or flint and steel created

the spark that lighted shavings and charcoal, and soon produced a brilliant result.

Often a loaf of brown bread had its bed in the hot ashes, and was drawn forth steaming and delicious for the early meal.

At eventide our father “hunted” apples on the live coals, for us, or roasted chestnuts, or popped corn. Never mind if he was a grave clergyman, with sober official duties to engage his highest thoughts and earnest attention. Like his divine Master he could stoop to embrace the children, and suit his benefactions to their simple and innocent desires. Whenever he could serve his family, without neglecting other claims, he was found in the domestic circle.

Inventive to an unusual degree, he made for his children toys that they could not have purchased. There are still preservd among us, perfect models of the old brown church, which it pleased him to construct when we were men and women, and when he himself was nearing the temple not made with hands.

Beside the old fireplace, in the gambrel roofed homestead, there hung leather bellows, with brass

nails, and a long handled copper “warming pan,” that tempered the cold sheets of our beds in the winter time.

It was no hardship to undress beside the fire, and run upstairs to jump into a nest so lovingly prepared.

If we had been good children during the day, our father never failed to put some token of his approbation under our pillows after we had fallen asleep, which proved next morning a pleasant greeting and happy stimulus. It was perhaps a very trifle; a sugar Gibraltar, a fig, some raisins or “conkles,” a stick of candy. The motive magnified the gift, and made of it a great fortune.

My mind constantly reverts to that dining room hearth. It was there that the Dominie, at a moment’s notice, produced “Shank’s horses,” upon which he trotted his babies, to their delectation, and where he played “Come ze Come” with the older offspring, or told stories to keep the young brood diverted, while the *Dominess* pursued some engrossing vocation.

It was there that we most frequently gathered when “Frigidata” drove us indoors, to spend our

evenings in close companionship with one another, and it was there that we not only had games and various amusements, but also lessons and profitable converse, that would help and bless us through all of life.

At this crowning season of the year the old chimney gave best, most marvelous cheer, and the little funny man with frost-covered beard, came down amid the soot, and left treasure for us while we slept and dreamed bright, happy dreams.

In summer time the earthen furnaces were placed in the chimney or out of doors, that the deadly fumes might prove harmless. Anthracite had not as yet become a general article of fuel. Great, hooded carts went up and down the village streets, their blackened drivers crying out their welcome commodity, “Charcoal! Charcoal!”

It was so easily kindled! Besides the portable coal furnace, sometimes the “gypsy kettle” hung on its tripod, and, heated by blazing fagots, cooked potatoes for the swine, or helped the housewife with her soft soap, that old time, invaluable concoction from lye and the refuse grease. It was no

small task to meet the demands of New England housekeeping in that day.

In the autumn especially, there were Herculean preparations for the cold season. The larder must be richly supplied. Dried apples and dried pumpkin, with all sorts of preserved fruits; sweet corn, and pickles; corned beef, and pork; spare rib, and tenderloin; head cheese, and souse; salted scraps, and long links of stuffed sausages; mince pies, piled high on the store-room shelves; firkins of apple sauce; "sounds and tongues;" mackerel and herring. All required the personal thought and supervision of the female, as well as the male head of the family.

Then came quiltings, making of comforters and thick woollen garments for the wintry reign.

The changing seasons brought busy work to the New England rectory, where the golden god was chary of his favors, and every inmate had to lend a helping hand for the well being of all.

So far as style and luxuriousness of furniture concerned, it was a very simple age. The painted or sanded floor was common for back rooms, and an ingrain carpet for the parlor prevailed in most

families, until gradually all the rooms were covered, some with "venetian," others with rag, and by-and-by a Brussels made its *entree* here and there, though that frugal rectory never arrived at such dignity.

It was a pleasant home, with all its self-denials; plenty of room, an unstinted table, health, joy, and love, abounding. What more could one want?

The front entry of the old house was so spacious, compared with most vestibules in village homes, that we rightly dubbed it "Hall," and sat there at twilight, with our guests, looking out upon the water opposite, and the boats gliding through the Channel.

On the ledge of the staircase were two fire-buckets. A law of the Rhode Island Colony, in 1754, made it obligatory that every householder should keep two good leathern buckets, capable of holding at least two gallons each, with the owner's name painted legibly thereon, to be kept in some convenient place, under penalty of, at first, twelve shillings, but which finally reached five dollars. These buckets always hung or were kept in the front entry, and were only used in case of fire, and

if no male person was in the house to take them, they were placed upon the front doorsteps to be used by the first passer by. They were annually inspected by the town sergeant, or one of the town constables, and a fine was imposed when they were in a useless condition.

Even after 1794, when fire engines were imported from London, the buckets were still in use, and passed by double line, from hand to hand, to be emptied and refilled. Hundreds at a time were sent over from Holland. They were very strongly made, stitched and bound, and lasted a long time.

After fifty years' absence I unearthed from the garret eaves of the old house in Wickford, two fire buckets with the name "L. Burge" as fresh as if just painted. It is a fashion nowadays to cherish the relics of the past, but unfortunately, most of the possessions of our early childhood were scattered before we could appreciate their future value, and can be recalled only by memory.

Flax and woollen wheels, "seairns," reels, bobbins, old-fashioned looms; all these we used to see in our neighbors' houses, and some of them were familiar under our own roof, though we were a

little later than the period of general home manufactures. The graceful tread and motion of a beautiful woman near our habitation, fascinated me, as she went back and forth whirling her big wheel, and twisting the fleece upon the spindle; and I have in mind a dear old lady with hetchel and flax; and another casting the swift shuttle, and pressing closely the gay woof with the heavy board.

It was a pleasure and an education to see these things in their progress, and the Dominie's children early learned, from beginning to end, the production of linen, woollen, and silk. The latter fabric they knew from the tiny black eggs, to the infinitesimal worms; the shining mulberry leaves for food; the fast developing creatures, whose voracious nibbling sounded like rain upon the housetop; the shedding coats; the translucent bodies; the pretty yellow cocoons among the bayberry bushes; the picking of the floss from the balls that were to be baked in order to kill the millers; the white winged moths, that were allowed to eat their way from other balls and ensure a future progeny.

Not only this, but a boiler was set in the attic

chimney, and a skilful woman summoned to go on with the process. We watched her eagerly as with thorny twigs she struck the cocoons that swam in the hot water, and so gathered up the silken threads and wound them upon a great reel. How fine and beautiful it was! and how mysterious a transformation from the black pin head dots that we had first seen on a small sheet of paper.

Then came the twisting of silk into coarser, or finer, and then we lost sight of it, as it was sent away to be dyed and woven into the glistening fabric that forms our royal robes.

Our father was æsthetic in his tastes. His acre of bare ground, he made into an enchanted place.

Dividing it into four squares, for garden, orchard, grain, and flowers, he surrounded all with the quick growing mulberry, and bestowed faithful culture, until by the time the home brood had grown old enough to appreciate, it yielded every variety of orchard fruit and vegetables and fragrant blossoms.

A shaded path led up to the old church. On one side were great beds of the sweet pink, and all along the other, we children had our "patches,"

each child an individual plot, that we might sow and plant at pleasure, and cull from at will.

Such emulation! Such floral designs! Crosses, and hearts, and circles, coming up green and charming and mysterious from the dusky ground, and developing and flowering, to teach us the most blessed of lessons concerning the Resurrection from the grave, and our own wonderful uprising and immortality, and future glory.

A beautiful avenue was at right angles from the long path, with a pretty summer house at the end. Another rustic little building stood near the home, overshadowed by two apple trees, and between us and “neighbor Spencer’s” was a verdant lawn, with a profusion of rose bushes here and there to shed a delicious fragrance.

The old barn that used to be our grand theatre of amusement, was moved up opposite the church and made into a dwelling house, that possibly it might add somewhat to the minister’s income. It stands there now, facing the deserted temple, and has long ago passed into strange hands.

I call it the “Grange,” for auld lang syne. Maybe the name may be adopted by the new owner.

To see the minister's former possessions in their present condition, one could never imagine the old time attractiveness ; there has been such cutting off from the original area.

Part has been added to the grounds of Mr. Aaron Thomas ; a portion is owned and occupied by Mr. Steere ; and the "Grange," with land adjoining, has another proprietor. The small remaining space, with the main house, purchased by Miss Rachel Greene, and a new one crowded on the rear ground, gives no suggestion of what has been.

It was the dream and desire of Mr. Burge to have a broad street through these grounds, from the old church to the centre of the village, and to renovate and improve the ancient and venerable building, rather than alienate heart and thought and holy worship, from the long cherished temple.

He offered to give part of the land for this purpose ; but other plans prevailed, and his proposition was not accepted, and after his removal from Wickford, the new church was built elsewhere, and the old one left desolate.

Over the door of the deserted building are the

dates, 1707, and 1800. Surmounting it, a trumpet vine struggles for life, and puts forth some brilliant blossoms. In the yard a few graves are left from among those that have been removed to the cemetery beyond the village. The eldest daughter of the old rector sleeps her long sleep in the shadow of her spiritual home. In the Glebe house she was born; in the old church she was “regenerated by water and the Holy Ghost.” There also was she confirmed, and at this altar she received the emblems of her Saviour’s dying love, in the sacrament of the Body and Blood. It was there she was married in the summer time, and close by she rests, until the voice of Jesus shall say to her, “Arise.”

It is a pleasant place to sleep.

People come from far and near to look at the old church. I stood recently in the grave-yard, where a party of excursionists, the Knights of Pythias from Pawtucket, with their families and friends, were examining the names on the head stones. Having with me the key of the sacred edifice, I was enabled to show these strangers the interior, that has for me such hallowed memories.

When inside I spoke to them of the early days and pleasant associations. Immediately, with that sympathy which unites all the children of the Great Father, they broke forth into singing—

“Blest is the tie that binds
Our hearts in Jesus’ love;”
then,

“Nearer, my God, to Thee,”
and finally, at my request,

“Praise God from whom all blessings flow,”
to the tune of “Old Hundred.”

Some of the Presbyterian elders stood in the chancel where my departed father had so often read the solemn words of our incomparable liturgy, and my heart was touched by the feeling that despite the difference of dogmatic training, there exists in all the true children of God the essential element of Divine Love and fellowship.

Another occasion of great interest was the baptism, in this old church of its ancestors, of the grandchild of Mr. Allan Thomas, and nephew of the late Bishop of Kansas. The father and mother, Mr. and Mrs. Aaron Thomas, with true sentiments of reverence and appreciation, wished the sacrament to be administered within these

walls, consecrated by years of solemn services, and hallowed associations. With exquisite taste they adorned the holy place with flowers and ferns, and the little babe was made “a member of Christ, the child of God, and an inheritor of the Kingdom of Heaven,” beside the chancel where so many of its relatives had in times past been “regenerate, and grafted into the Body of Christ’s Church.”

Later, the children of the Honorable David Baker were taken for holy baptism to this same dear old St. Paul’s, proving how true is the veneration for this Mother of the Narragansett churches.

To have been participants in any sacred service or blessed Sacrament in this historic and time-honored edifice, is something to look back upon as a very precious privilege.

When, after long years of desertion and solitude, in August, 1885, the old church was reopened for a series of Sunday services, the birds that had made their nests and hatched their young on God’s holy altar, had to be driven out from their quiet retreat.

It was a happy and festive occasion ; the assem-



THE INTERIOR—OLD ST. PAUL'S.

As it is to-day. (pp. 216-217.)

bling of another generation within their Father's house.

Very few of the aged members were still upon the earth, but those who yet lived, hastened joyfully to the old home to help keep the feast.

The orchestra from Hamilton made memorable music, such as had not resounded through the place since the days of the big bass viol and the flute, that accompanied the voices in the long ago.

The Rev. Wm. Ayres, now of Kansas, inaugurated the revived worship in old St. Paul's. He writes concerning this relic of other times:

"Among my remembrances the rescue of the old church from destruction by the elements, is prominent. It was repaired and restored to its early condition and bids fair to last another century at least. A wise conservatism, at a time when, in some quarters, symbolism has run mad, and hierarchical pretences come to the front, is immensely valuable, and nowhere can it be more fitting than in one of the oldest parishes which continues to be, as it always has been, one of the potent influences upon the Church in America. This may be abundantly evidenced in many instances in the begin-

ning, and in all the long past, by the preaching from the Narragansett Church, and by the devotion and example of those brought up in St. Paul's and who are now scattered abroad.

"But the most conspicuous proof is to be found at present, in the life and labors of the Bishop of Kansas,* a true son of St. Paul's, Narragansett. In and through him, it may be said that the leaven of the old church still works mightily, and that, too, in a region utterly unknown to its founders, and but dimly known, and considered a desert, by the last generation, yet now having a million and a half of inhabitants.

"The influence here is not all that the old church is accomplishing through Bishop Thomas. In another great Western State his educational efforts vied with the pastoral, and he practically founded at least one valuable Theological School. Under his wise and energetic ministrations, and attracted by the singular beauty and devotion of his character, the Church in Kansas is making sure and steady progress in numbers, and spirituality. For

* The Rt. Rev. Elisha Smith Thomas, D.D., died 1895.



ELISHA SMITH THOMAS, D.D.,
Second Bishop of Kansas (pp. 218-219.)

this we owe a debt to the old Narragansett church, as well as to our late beloved and sainted Dioceasan, the Rt. Rev. Thomas Hubbard Vail, D.D."

Bishop Thomas' remains were taken to Wickford, and for some hours lay in state in the new church. He was robed in the episcopal habit with purple stole. The casket was covered with a violet colored pall with white border, and violets and white flowers adorned the chancel.

Bishop Clark, of Rhode Island, read the burial service, and the Rev. W. W. Ayres delivered the sermon. There were present besides the rector of the parish, Rev. S. Borden Smith, four of the former rectors, Messrs. Henshaw, Goodwin, McGill, and Ayres.

The Bishop was laid to rest in Elmwood Cemetery, a few miles west of the village, where the committal service was read by those who had long known and loved him. A beautiful Ionic cross marks his grave.

It seemed fitting that one whose first breath was drawn in our beautiful Venice, and whose early life was spent in our pleasant village haunts, should come home to sleep among his own people,

who will proudly point out his grave and speak gratefully of his high mental attainment, and, above all, of his devotion to our Almighty Lord, and to the extension of His Kingdom upon earth.

CHAPTER XII.

The New Church.

IT stands on the right hand, on Main Street, about half way between Bridge Street and the lower Wharf.

The corner stone was laid on the first day of September, 1847, by the Right Rev. John P. K. Henshaw, then Bishop of Rhode Island, assisted by the Rev. Messrs. Vail, Cooke, Crane, Eames, and the rector of the parish, the Rev. John Hill Rouse.

The church was consecrated on St. Paul's Day, the twenty-fifth of January, 1848. The sermon was by Bishop Henshaw, and there were present of the clergy, Messrs. Burge, Crane, Vail, Eames, Carpenter, and the Rector, all of whom have passed to their eternal home.

The new edifice is of wood, tasteful in architecture, and of seating capacity for about four hundred people. A recessed chancel is at the southern end, and at the north is a gallery with Oriel, stained glass window.

The altar is of richly carved oak in three panels with the sacred symbols—the Lamb triumphant; the chalice and paten, upon a crown of thorns; and a pelican feeding her young. The top is of *Dove* marble, with five crosses cut, one in the middle, and one at each corner, and this inscription:

“A gift to St. Paul’s Church, by Mrs. Anstis Lee, Daughter of Lodowick Updike, Esq. She died in 1864, in the 100th year of her age.”

She had some years before presented an imported table as an altar for communion purposes, in the old church, and when the new one was built, it was also used there.

Recently Mr. Daniel Berkeley Updike, a grand-nephew of Mrs. Lee, contributed toward the erection of a beautiful altar, and consented that the consecrated slab should be inserted, and the mahogany frame incorporated with the chapel altar, so that the intention of the departed donor is still respected and fulfilled.



ST. PAUL'S CHURCH, WICKFORD, R. I.

The present edifice (pp. 222-223.)

The chancel window is a memorial of Mrs. Abigail Reynolds, a sister of Mrs. Lee. The central lancet represents Paul the Aged, with the Bible in his right hand, and the sword of his martyrdom in his left. In the two other lancets are the symbols of the four Evangelists: St. Matthew, the Ox; St. Mark, the Lion; St. Luke, the Angel; and St. John, the Eagle.

The choice book devoted to the altar service, is the gift of Mr. Daniel Berkeley Updike. It is one of the Revised, limited and costly edition of the Prayer Book of 1893, the plates whereof were immediately destroyed.

The offices are exquisitely and elaborately illustrated by appropriate symbolic figures and flowers, Mr. Updike himself being one of the chief designers.

The brass "Rest," Bible and Prayer books, and hymnals, for altar, pulpit, and lectern, are from St. Agnes' Guild, that is faithful in supplying such needs as may from time to time occur.

The font stands in the southeast, near the door leading into the chapel, which adjoins the church on the east. It was presented by the Rev. Samuel

Brenton Shaw, whose early associations were with old St. Paul's, Narragansett, and whose long ministry was exercised in Vermont, Lanesboro, Mass., and Barrington, Rhode Island. There is an oak cover, with brass cross, and a handsome brass ewer, thus inscribed:

“A thank offering to St. Paul’s Parish.
Clarence Thomas, Baptized Sept. 21st, 1889.
Rt. Rev. Elisha Thomas, S.T.D.”

Over the chapel door on the East from the chancel, is a white marble tablet,

“In memory of the Rev. James McSparran, D.D.,
for thirty-five years the minister of St. Paul’s, Narragansett
He departed this life
Dec. 1st, 1758.

In memory also, of
Rev. Samuel Fayerweather,
his successor, who died 1871.
Both were Missionaries of
the S. P. G. F. P.
3rd Jubilee, A.D. 1861.”

In East Greenwich there is a very beautiful lancet window in the chancel, “In memory of the Rev. L. Burge, and Elizabeth, his wife,” a tribute from the late Gov. Wm. Greene and Mrs. Greene, who was a daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Burge.

During a residence of nearly two years in East Greenwich, Mr. Burge had been thoroughly identified with the parish of St. Luke’s, and had fre-

quently officiated in the old church in association with its rector, the Rev. Dr. Crane.

A brass cross has lately been placed in the chancel of the new St. Paul's, Wickford. The base bears this inscription:

"In memory of the Rev. Samuel Burge, who for twenty years ministered in old St. Paul's Church, Narragansett.

'He being dead yet speaketh.'

'God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord, Jesus Christ.'"

By the font in the new church is a window, "In memory of Gideon Freeborn, who for fifty years served as vestryman, and warden of St. Paul's, and thirty years as superintendent of the Sunday School."

The central representation is the Baptism of our Saviour. Above is the Dove. Below, the Cross, with vine and grapes surrounding a scroll with the text, "I am the true vine." The window was from loving relatives, joined by the Sunday School.

The next window is a memorial to Mrs. Charlotte Thomas—Mary Magdalene in the garden of the tomb, kneeling at the feet of her risen Lord. The lower panel bears a scroll with the ejaculation,

"Rabboni!" Near by is an oaken frame with brass tablet,

"To the glory of God and in memory of Allen M. Thomas, for five years Warden and for fifty-two years Vestryman and Clerk of St. Paul's. Born 1806—died 1887.

"Lord, I have loved the habitation of Thy house, and the place where Thine honor dwelleth." Ps. 26—8."

Tablet and window are in memory of the father and mother of Bishop Thomas.

The organ is on the east from the chancel, and is the bequest of "Esther Chappel Sanford," who left in her will, three thousand dollars for the organ, and for the Guild of St. Paul's. This instrument was placed in the church on St. Paul's Day, 1889.

Beside it is a finely-painted window,

"To the glory of God, and in tender memory of Hannah Eldred Goodwin.

Born July 11, 1838.

Died Jan. 5, 1877."

A crown, with stars and lilies, adorns the upper panel. The central one has the figure of St. Cecilia, below which is this tribute to the departed member of St. Paul's, who for some years played on the organ, led the choir, and also that of the Hamilton Mission:

"In her, as though in instruments of music,
Faith did with her own fingers touch the strings,

discoursing high of virtues excellent." The lower panel with the inscription, is illuminated with the Passion flower, and other ornamentation.

On the same side of the church is a beautiful window, with Christ healing the sick, who are grouped about Him in imploring attitudes; a Greek cross above, a scroll below, with the words, "The Lord will take away from thee all sickness."

Crowns, and palms, and other jubilant emblems surround the monogram, I. H. S.

The inscription is:

"To the glory of God, and in loving memory of William A. Shaw, M.D.
Warden of St. Paul's Church, 1837-1879."

There is another most appropriate memorial gift, of a pocket communion service for the sick, from the son and daughter of this lamented "good physician," and two choice altar vases have been lately presented by Elizabeth Brenton Shaw in loving remembrance of her brother, John P. C. Shaw, departed this life Dec. 13, 1899.

A most beautiful window, on the opposite side of the nave, has been placed by Miss Carrie Newton, in memory of her sister, Mary, recently departed this life. A female figure stands with spir-

itual face raised trustfully toward heaven. Her right hand rests upon the Cross, and in her left she holds a bunch of Easter lilies. The Holy Dove is seen above the emblem of our Faith. The lower panel of the window is filled with lilies. The scroll contains the record, "In the Cross of Christ I glory."

Miss Newton has also given a window in memory of her sister Elizabeth—a kneeling figure before the altar, with clasped hands, and eyes uplifted toward the table of Commandments, while she fervently ejaculates:

"Oh, how I love Thy law!"

A rare cross has been placed upon the altar by Mr. Strowbridge, in memory of his lamented wife Clara.

The clock in the tower of the new St. Paul's, is from one of the recent rectors, the Rev. Daniel Goodwin, who by this benefaction to the parish, has also greatly blessed the inhabitants of the village.

The exquisite pulpit in the new St. Paul's is six feet high. The base is oak in Gothic style, corresponding to the altar. The upper part is brass, the

columns twisted to agree with the lectern. There are five panels carved in brass. The center front shows the cross with monogram I.H.S. and the episcopal signs, mitre and crosier. On the first panel to the right, is the sword, emblem of St. Paul. The second has the *Agnus Dei*—the “Lamb of God.” On the first panel to the left is the open book, emblematic of St. John. The second has a double triangle, with dove, emblem of the Holy Trinity. The pulpit is finished at the top by a railing of oak, with a brass insertion bearing the inscription:

“For the preaching of the Word, and in tender memory of
Elisha Smith Thomas, late Bishop of Kansas.”

Other bequests have been made to the church by its grateful members.

I copy from the records:

“A Glebe was given for the use of the church in North Kingstown, by one Mr. Norton A. Taylor, in Newport, which was transferred by General Assembly, and which was sold for one hundred pounds sterling to be used toward the McSparran property.”

“In 1870, a legacy certificate for eight shares of

stock, twenty-five dollars per share, par value, from James Updike, through Daniel, his nephew, deposited in the Wickford National Bank."

"From Mr. Allen Thomas, forty shares of Bank stock, at fifty dollars per share, in Weybosset Bank, Providence, one hundred dollars annually of the interest to go toward the salary of the rector; the rest of the yearly interest for other Church needs."

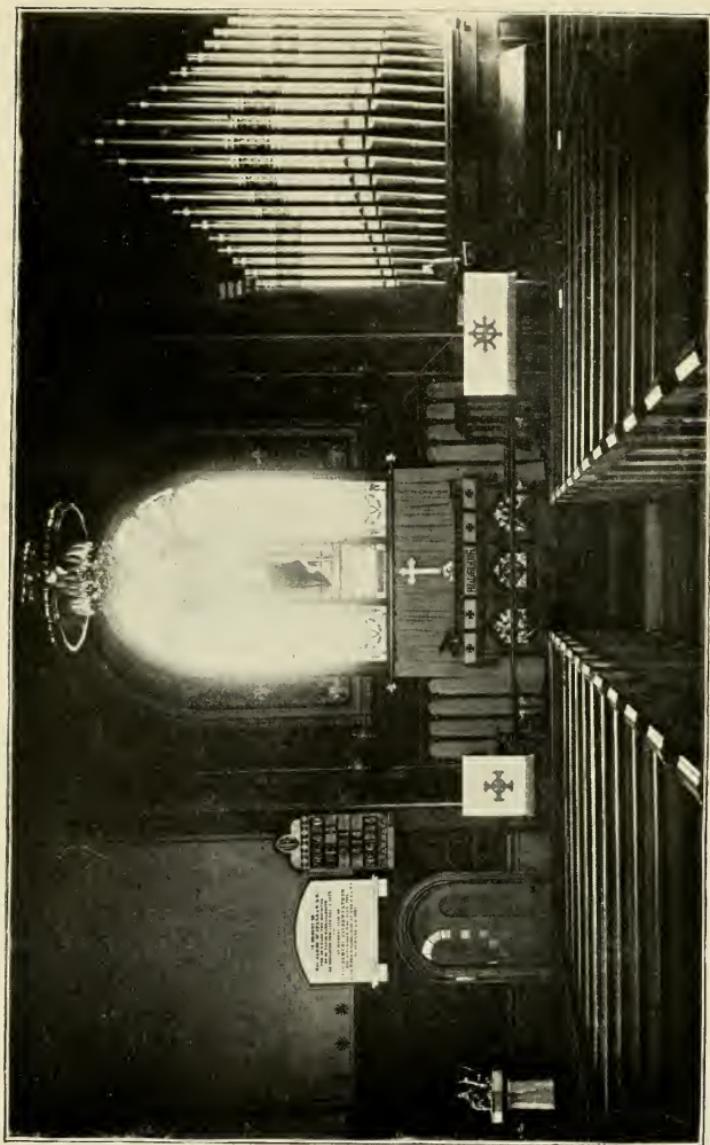
"Sixteen shares of stock, ninety dollars per share, from Miss Mary Esther Freeborn, daughter of Gideon, in Union National Bank, Newport, R.I. part of the annual interest for the rector's salary, and part for the general expenses of the church."

"One thousand dollars from Mrs. Samuel Pearce—Wickford National Bank—toward the Endowment Fund for church expenses."

"Fifteen hundred dollars from Mr. Allen Chadssey, to be devoted to keeping the church in repair."

In addition to the bequests already recorded, there is the recent legacy of one thousand dollars to St. Paul's Church, and fifteen hundred dollars, and a sofa, to St. Paul's Guild, from Mrs. Rhoda Ann Chappel Eldred, lately deceased.

It is with gratitude that I also mention her



THE INTERIOR—ST. PAUL'S CHURCH, WICKFORD, R. I.

Present edifice. (pp. 230-231.)

generous remembrance of her old rector, Rev. L. Burge, by the gift of five hundred dollars each, to two of his daughters.

A recent offering is a beautiful Prayer desk from Mr. and Mrs. Hambly, in memory of Miss Myra Lewis.

Another gift is from Mr. Esbon Sanford—an altar rail, of oak and brass, in memory of his departed wife, who belonged to the Altar Guild. Miss R. A. Shaw has left recently to the church a legacy of two hundred dollars for St. Paul's.

Among the faithful members there seems a conscientious thought of the dear old Mother from whom they have derived their spiritual care and nutriment, and they gratefully express their sense of their obligation, by a tangible offering when they come to die.

Belonging to the church property there is a pretty rectory, just beyond the new Bridge; on Hamilton Avenue facing the water and looking across upon the church spire. The Guild House stands next to the rectory on the west.

But for the depreciation of bank stock, and

some unfortunate investments, the parish of St. Paul's would be in excellent financial condition.

Though not wholly a parochial institution, this was the original design of its erection, and properly it should belong to St. Paul's.



GUILD HALL—ST. PAUL'S CHURCH, WICKFORD, R. I.

There could be no more charming locality than its foundation. The water laps the stone wall of its embankment, the channel being near, and so deep as to admit vessels of quite large tonnage. Great schooners and brigs come up to the wharf close by, and the Narragansett Pier Ferry steam-boat winters near the bridge. Up the Cove there

is a charming sweep, with pretty residences upon the shore on either side, and sail boats and skiffs gliding back and forth.

Along the Avenue there is much driving in summer past the Guild House and rectory, toward Cold Spring Beach and out toward Hamilton and the country roads.

Opposite lies Oakland, originally called "Argoo," from the first intelligible utterance of an infant resident.

It is one of the choicest sites just beyond the new bridge, and is frequently the scene of innocent festivity, as in clam bakes, lawn parties, etc., etc. It is now the property of the Hon. Mr. Gregory.

CHAPTER XIII.

Finale.

IN summing up the beauties and advantages of our village, I think the chief attraction is our glorious Narragansett Bay, whose arms embrace it, making it the charming Venice of our dearest love.

We have no ceremonial of the ring to wed us to the all-pervading waters; nevertheless, our attachment is strong and enduring.

The ebb and flow of the tides bring freshness and health to the people, and fish, and bivalves, and Crustacea, give to them free and welcome nutriment, besides furnishing a profitable industry in the export to inland towns.

Years ago, the Block Island fishermen, in tar-paulin hats and capes, swarmed to our piers, with

their menhaden laden boats, landing their cargoes for the enrichment of the suburban farms.

This method of fertilizing proved offensive, and was soon discontinued, but there is other ample encouragement for line and net, and an unfailing market for lobsters and scallops, and various productions from Bay and shores.

Walking one day recently along Washington Street, which borders a portion of the south shore, I was curious to know the meaning of a long line of small, creamy looking substances that hung in the sunlight. On inquiry I was informed that these were the skins and bladders of the "weak fish," and were sent in large quantities to a Philadelphia glue manufactory.

For bathing there are on the shore east of Pleasant Street, and at Cold Spring, facilities that cannot be surpassed.

Phillips Brooks speaks of the custom among the Venetian nurses of fastening strong cords around the waists of the children, and holding to them, when their charges would venture too far in the water. Our young people rollick fearlessly in the briny waves. They need no tether, nor restraint.

Some of them are like mermen and mermaids, and swim gracefully out to the legendary rock, where the poor lovesick Indian, who dared raise his eyes to the Sachem's daughter, was bound until the overwhelming tide choked his presumption.

There is one locality that was, in our childhood, considered dangerous. It was at the end of Fowler Street, and nearly opposite Cornelius Island. Our father owned the beautiful Point lot now in possession of Mr. John Lewis, and, as we often played there, it was necessary to warn us against yielding to the temptation to venture into the water near by. Sharks had been seen there; moreover the sands shelved, and the foothold was treacherous, so that one stepped into unlooked for depths, and was suddenly submerged.

In 1782, whales are said to have been noticed in the Bay, and now and then sea monsters came from their ocean home to reconnoitre strange waters.

This summer an immense sea turtle was caught in the weir of one of the townsmen, and served as a wonderful exhibition to those who had never seen so large a specimen. The length was fully six feet, and the adamantine back upheld a heavy man,

with whom the creature moved about as though the burden were but a feather's weight.

To tread the floor of the sea would no doubt bring marvelous revelations; but I am content to traverse the liquid surface, and enjoy the varied beauties from a ship's deck.

The Narragansett Bay affords real delight as one sails its length and breadth, of eighteen miles by from three to twelve, and notes the beauty of its islands, and the attractive settlements along its shores.

By it, the state is unequally divided, the greater part of territory being on the west. To the north lies Providence, east are Bristol and Fall River, Pawtucket, East Greenwich, Wickford, and smaller villages lie west, and Block Island is oceanward, at the entrance of the Bay.

Aquidneck, Canonicut, and Prudence, are prominent among its islands, and the lesser ones are picturesque, and noticeable in the midst of the blue waters. No wonder that the Colonies coveted such possessions as would give them command of the Narragansett Bay! Its harbors are capacious, affording entrance to ships of large tonnage, and

thus proving of great advantage to trade and commerce.

From Arnold's *Comprehensive History* I quote:

"The Narragansett Bay which seemed the destined refuge for the outcasts of every faith, attracted the wanderers by its fertile shores, and genial climate. The King's Commissioners reported it as 'the largest and safest port in New England, and nearest the sea, and fittest for trade.' "

We are proud, too, of the bravery that stirred its waters during foreign invasion.

The *Liberty* and the *Gaspee* and the *Rose Frigate*, and the *Swan*, speak of energetic and fearless action. And the first broadside by Commodore Whipple against a portion of an invading navy, still echoes along our shores.

But we prefer the calmer memories that cluster around our pleasant Bay.

Dickens pictures "Little Dorrit" gliding over the Grand Canal in the far away Venice, or sitting in her balcony overhanging the water, or leaning on the broad cushioned ledge looking over and

watching the sunset, and the black gondolas, and dreaming away the hours.

We skim the blue deep in our white sail boats, or our flat bottomed dories, or keeled skiffs, or we gaze from our windows upon a beautiful landscape, sea-girt and sea-enlaced, and are rapt in happy contemplation and reverie.

We may lack the oriental brilliance of the foreign city; the creamy white palaces on the Rialto, tiled in red, and topped with quaint chimneys, overhanging balconies of marble, fringed with flowers, with gay awnings above, and streaming shadows below; the narrow quays crowded with people, flashing bright bits of color in the blazing sun; swarms of gondolas, bareas and lesser water spiders darting in and out; lazy, red-sailed luggers, melon loaded, with crinkled green shadows crawling beneath their bows, while at the far end, over the glistening highway beaded with people, curves the beautiful bridge, "an ivory arch against the turquoise sky."

Hopkinson-Smith gives this vivid description, and also speaks of "the picturesque gondolier with loose shirt, throat and chest bare, and head

bound with red kerchief; of the rambling houses three or four stories high on the lagoon, where the fishermen live, and the boats with gay colored sails, and the anchored huge wicker crab and fish baskets."

There are deep, dark shadows and very sad contrasts in the Venice abroad. Her "Bridge of Sighs," her dreadful prison, and the terrible fate of those who crossed the beautiful span, always present hideous thoughts amid the grandeur and revelry.

We dwell with sweet peace in our serener haven, content that it only resembles its Old World ancestor in some of its natural features, and rejoicing that no image of oppression or death meets us as we look into the placid waters that clasp and make cheery our beautiful

"VENICE OF AMERICA."

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